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ADVENTURES OF AN AMATEUR ARCHIVIST[1]

WE ARE meeting today in our sixth annual session under the shadow of a world calamity. Let us accept it as a good omen that we meet in this historic city of the Old South. As we see her today, charming in her physical beauty, confident in her industrial might, inspiring in her culture, it is hard for us to realize that within the memory of living men she herself was the victim of a devastating conflict. Yet from temporary defeat, she has wrung victory; from disaster, she has risen to power and prosperity; from sacrifice and suffering, she has acquired strength and courage and vision. She stands today a glorious symbol of the unconquerable American spirit.

Again war in its most devastating form is sweeping over the face of the earth. Our own country has been sucked into the maelstrom and is girding up her strength to beat down the powers of force and evil. We cannot doubt that by the might of justice and freedom and righteousness she will win through to victory. But today the demands upon her are so great, her task so vast, her danger so imminent that she is justified in calling upon all of us to cut to an irreducible minimum our peace-time activities that do not contribute to her ultimate triumph.

Why then are we here today? Our answer is that we are here because it is our firm conviction that our work as archivists will contribute not only to victory but also to that just and sane peace that must crown that victory. We are the custodians of the accumulated evidences of those traditions and ideals of democracy and freedom for which we fight and without which, we believe, no such peace can be established or maintained in the world. That is our justification at this critical moment.

A glance at our program shows that it is concerned chiefly with

[1] Presidential address delivered at the sixth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, at Richmond, Virginia, on October 26, 1942.

archival problems as they relate to war and peace. They are serious problems that will tax our mental and physical strength to the utmost. It is for that reason that I have thought it wise to afford you a brief period of relaxation this evening by striking a somewhat lighter note reminiscent of happier days.

The subject of my address was suggested in a letter written to me some eight years ago by a distinguished contemporary American historian. Upon learning of my appointment as the first archivist of the United States, Professor William E. Lingelbach wrote to me that he considered the office of archivist "a key position not only for the work in Washington, but also throughout the Nation at large." He then added: "The successive stages in getting the Archives project started in right will be interesting history some day." Those "successive stages" are the subject of my address this evening.

They might also have suggested the title except for the fact that responsibility for the title rests upon one of my distinguished predecessors in the position to which your kindness elevated me at our last annual meeting. In his presidential address of 1940, Waldo Leland told us that when he received the notice of his election as president of our Society, he was "happily pursuing" his personal and official education in Lima, the "City of the Kings," gazing with awe upon the "towering Andes," and still somewhat dazed by his "initiation into the fascinating mysteries of Peruvian archaeology." He confessed that the "exaltation of mind," induced by these novel and stimulating circumstances, led him to accept his election without giving sufficient consideration to "the incongruous position" that he, who had never been an archivist, "would occupy as president of this professional association." However, upon his return to mental normalcy, his apprehensions were allayed by the comforting thought that if he had never been an archivist "there were many of the members of the Society who had not been archivists very long." Thus with that amiability that is so characteristic of him he told us in the kindliest way possible that he considered all of us mere amateurs playing at a game intended for professionals. The scientific exactitude of his classification was so obvious, so far as one of us was concerned, that I have chosen for the title of my address, "Adventures of an Amateur Archivist."

The scholar who will some day write the history that Professor Lingelbach had in mind will, of course, find his chief sources in the archives of the National Archives, but he will not find all of them

there. Many of those "successive stages" to which he referred were never recorded in official documents and are known only to those who had a part in them. It is of these unrecorded experiences—at least of some of them—that I shall speak this evening. Needless to say, this address makes no pretense of being a history of the National Archives even in its infancy; it is nothing more than a simple narrative of certain incidents of more or less interest that are tied together into some sort of unity only because they are all phases of the same general subject.

The National Archives is the concrete expression of a national ideal. No single person, no single group of persons created it. The ideal is as old as the nation, the institution as young as yesterday. Among its creators must be enrolled presidents and cabinet secretaries, senators and representatives, highly placed administrators and lowly placed clerks. With them were associated a goodly company of learned societies and patriotic organizations, of publicists and scholars and other conservators of national traditions and ideals. At the top of the roll stands the name of a president of the United States. It was President Hayes who, in 1877, first recommended to Congress the erection of a suitable repository for the nation's archives and his recommendation came to fruition half a century later when Congress authorized the erection of the National Archives building. The appropriation was made upon the recommendation of President Coolidge; the cornerstone was laid by President Hoover; the act creating the National Archives establishment was signed by President Roosevelt. It is truly a national institution.

My own official connection with it began with my appointment as the first archivist of the United States on October 10, 1934; it closed with the acceptance of my resignation by the President on September 15, 1941. These are matters of record and I mention them here merely to delimit the period of my amateurish adventures in an ancient and honorable profession. The National Archives was a one-man institution for one day only, for I was merely the first of a staff that, at one time or another, included more than six hundred men and women from every state in the union. As it stands today it is the creation of many men and many women, and if the too frequent repetition of the pronoun "I" in this address grates harshly upon your nerves, please bear in mind that it is used in a co-operative and not an individual connotation.

The first and most persistent of the many "successive stages" in getting the archives started was the problem of the staff. The National Archives Act as originally enacted gave the archivist authority to appoint members of the staff "solely with reference to their fitness for their particular duties and without regard to civil-service law," with the single exception that any employee or official with salary of $5,000 or over should "be appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate."

The phrase, "solely with reference to their fitness for their particular duties," would have had a reassuring effect had it not been for its twin phrase, "without regard to civil-service law." The former set up a high ideal, the latter was a patent and unmistakable invitation to the patronage brokers. I suppose that nothing so perturbs the equanimity of a newly appointed and inexperienced administrator in Washington as the patronage bogey. It greets him upon his awakening in the early morning; it sits by his side during the long working day; it is his bedfellow throughout the wee small hours of the night. You will, therefore, understand my trepidation of mind when during my first official day in Washington an experienced administrator upon learning that the archives was listed as a "patronage agency," said to me: "The politicians have played a joke on you!"

Comforting, wasn't it? But now, in retrospect, I must confess that the expectations aroused by his remark proved to be worse than the realizations. Two men who had some influence in the administration smoothed our way through the patronage maze. One of these men was the President of the United States. Even before I had received my commission, the President sent to me a letter he had received from a Congressman urging him to appoint a certain man as "first assistant archivist." This man was a scholar of distinction and well qualified for the job. Nevertheless, it did seem to me to be somewhat premature to consider the appointment of a "first assistant archivist" when as yet there was not even an archivist. It was, therefore, a relief to read the President's memorandum attached to the letter in which he said: "This is for your information, as I do not want to force anybody on you as a member of your staff. That is your responsibility." I took his statement to mean that the archivist was to have a free rein in appointments, including those which the President himself was authorized to make, and I never had any reason to think otherwise.

The other man to whom I referred was the chairman of the Democratic National Executive Committee. There was a suspicion, more or less prevalent throughout the country, that Mr. Farley took a certain interest in matters of patronage. This suspicion explains a dispatch that appeared soon after my arrival in Washington in a New York newspaper under the intriguing headline, "Archives Politics." The body of the dispatch was as follows:

> The new Archives Building, as stately and august as the new Supreme Court Building, should be free from political intrigue and sharpshooting. But it isn't. Instead of bending over precious books and records in his cloistered sanctuary, Archivist R. D. W. Connor has a political broil on his hands. The fight is between him and Farley, who is irked at the sight of jobs going to waste. Early in the session, Congress appropriated funds for 90 archive officers. To date Connor has appointed 25. . . . Farley is demanding action—quick. In less than two weeks it will be too late, for if the remaining 65 appointments are not made by July 1, the money reverts to the Treasury. Farley says it will revert only over his dead body.

It is surely a curious fact that if there existed a Connor-Farley "political broil," one of the broilers at least had never heard about it; and, further, if one of them was willing to lay down his life in so good a cause, he forgot to mention his sacrificial ambition to the other. Of course, to the news reporter, it was a mere bagatelle that at the time his dispatch was sent from Washington every member of the staff of the National Archives authorized by Congress had already been appointed and was on the job.

James A. Farley showed a mild interest in the work of the National Archives, but at no time did he seek to control or influence any appointment to its staff. Only on one occasion did he intervene in a matter affecting an appointment. That was a case in which his chief lieutenant at the Democratic national headquarters for reasons known only to himself, was trying to block an appointment I had recommended to the President. Mr. Farley called us into conference, heard our statements, and turning to me said: "It's your job and if you want this man it's O.K. with me. I shall approve your recommendation."

It was to be expected, I suppose, that the chief pressure for jobs would come from Capitol Hill. This was one expectation that was fully realized, but this statement also needs to be qualified. So far as the National Archives was concerned, the great majority of Con-

gressmen were content to endorse applications of their constituents without attempting to exert pressure to compel compliance. A few others, on the contrary, were not above threats of reprisals if their recommendations were not accepted, but only two so far as I know ever attempted to put their threats into effect. Both attempts failed. With rare exceptions, our relations with Congressmen in matters of patronage were uniformly satisfactory.

It was our ambition and our constant endeavor to live up to the ideal set by Congress in the requirement that all personnel be selected on a basis of fitness for the duties to be performed. The most serious obstacle to the attainment of this ideal with the fact that there existed no reservoir of professional archivists upon which the amateur archivist could draw. This obstacle, however, was partially offset by conditions in the country in 1934 and for sometime thereafter. It was the period of the "Great Depression," and thousands of people through no fault of their own were unemployed. Moreover, a continuous stream of capable, well trained young scholars was annually pouring forth from our colleges and universities into a world that had no demand for their services. From this source, the National Archives was able to recruit many exceptionally able employees who in normal times would have taken their places in competing professions. There was, of course, a definite limit to this advantageous situation and when we saw that limit approaching we recommended to Congress that it remove the National Archives from the list of "patronage agencies." The necessary legislation was passed in 1938.

How successfully did we live up to our ideal? Perhaps the best answer to this question is the following passage from the annual report of the archivist with reference to the staff at the time it was placed under Civil Service:

> It may not be amiss at this time to make some note of the character of the personnel that has been obtained by appointing employees "solely with reference to [their] fitness for their particular duties." Although academic achievements cannot be fully accepted as criteria for the determination of ability, particularly in the case of the administrative personnel, it is nevertheless significant that of the 319 employees on the staff of The National Archives at the close of the fiscal year [1938] no less than 160 held bachelor's degrees, 73 master's degrees, and 32 the degree of doctor of philosophy. Moreover, many of the employees do not regard their education as finished when they join the staff. The records show that, during the fiscal year 1938, 68 members of the staff

were increasing their qualifications for archival work by attendance at local professional schools, colleges, and universities.

No wonder a disappointed Congressman complained on the floor of the House that "in order to secure employment in the Archives, one must have a postgraduate course in one of the larger universities of the country, as well as considerable experience in some similar institution." The "patronage bogey" was but a bogey after all!

The setting up of the National Archives introduced a new word into the American language that seemed to appeal to the risibilities of the Washington newsmongers. Apparently they had never heard, not to say used, the word "archives" unless, parrot-like, they wanted to consign something to "the archives of gravity," without knowing in the least what they were or where located. When the appointment of an archivist was announced, the more curious among them dashed off to consult their Websters that they might display their erudition before their less curious colleagues. Having thus broadened their knowledge, they hastened to tell the world just what sort of creature this New Deal creation was. A Washington news photographer dug up somewhere in his "morgue" an ancient photograph of the new archivist and distributed copies to his clients under the heading: "He's U. S. Archivist." The photo looked more like a vaudeville make-up of a communist than a staid and very conservative country schoolmaster and I was relieved to note that the photographer had furnished a legend for the reassurance of his patrons: "No, dear children, an archivist is not a radical. He is one who preserves historical documents." By such a narrow margin did I escape the attention of the Dies Committee.

For several months after my arrival in Washington, friends invariably introduced me to strangers with the apologetic explanation, "Mr. Connor is our first archivist." With a perfectly blank stare, the other invariably countered with, "And just what is an archivist?" If I explained that an archivist is a custodian of archives, I got just exactly nowhere, for the inevitable response was, "But what are archives?" It was really quite embarrassing until help came like manna from heaven. At a cocktail party at my apartment, my Negro servant who had come to Washington with me from Chapel Hill, busily circulated among the guests distributing canapés of anchovies and hugely enjoying his first Washington party. One of the guests, who had also recently come from Chapel Hill, having a certain amount of

cocktail safely stored under his shirt and another glassful in his hand, in a happy frame of mind and at peace with the world, approached the servant and reaching for an anchovy, said: "Henry, what are these things?" With a grin, Henry replied: "'Deed, suh, I don't eggsactly know, but I thinks dey's archives." That was one definition Washingtonians never failed to comprehend.

We were, indeed, fortunate to have such an adequate definition for most people in Washington who thought at all about the matter thought of archives as only "rare," "unique," or what they chose to call "historic documents." When an announcement was made that the Public Works Administrator had allotted $3,600,000 for stacks in the new archives building, a Washington correspondent reported to his paper that "a roar about it is going up at the Capitol." In explanation he said:

> There will be a louder roar when Congress convenes. It is coming to be regarded as a wholly unnecessary and unwise expenditure. Congress intended the Archives building for the important state papers and historic documents of the Republic, things like the original constitution, for example. All this new money for new stacks has led to the belief that it is the intent of the bureaucrats to load the costly structure up with cart loads of dry-as-dust departmental papers, the usual trash that is wrapped up in the customary red tape.

Either the story was an invention of the reporter's infertile imagination, or somebody at the capitol was pulling his leg. I am inclined to the leg-pulling theory; certain internal evidence seems to point to its author. One congressman did attempt to get up a "roar" but his "roar" never exceeded the tempo of a whine.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the question, "What are archives?," was of merely academic interest. Suppose we rephrase it as follows: "Should the National Archives be considered merely as another historical museum or should it become in reality what its name implies?" The answer to this question involved the whole future, character, and functions of the institution. Let me cite a single illustration selected from many. When the archives appropriation for 1936-1937 was under consideration by the House, the chairman of the Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, an uncompromising adherent of the "historic documents" school, moved a drastic cut in the amount recommended by the Appropriations Committee. In a sweeping attack on our conception of the purposes and functions of the National Archives, he said:

> . . . the original idea was to build a small structure something like the Folger Memorial to store a few rare documents, such as the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, treaties, proclamations of outstanding interest, and so forth. . . . Here you have a structure costing well over $12,000,000, and you . . . are going to fill it with a lot of trash which had better be in ashes. . . . It seems to me right now is the time for the [National Archives] council to get together and come to a sane understanding of just what is to be the policy in the future and stay within that policy.

His attempt to strangle the institution in its cradle failed and the council, fortunately, was not forced to adopt his idea of a sane policy for the future.

Plainly we had an educational job to do and we determined to miss no opportunity to speak and write about archives in general and the National Archives in particular. The lists of public addresses and published articles on the subject that appear in the appendices of the annual reports of the archivists, though by no means complete, make a rather impressive showing. Even more important were the annual reports themselves and the hearings before the House Committee on Appropriations.

Did we succeed in our object? I am sure I do not know; perhaps it would be wise to adopt an attitude of healthy skepticism, or at least of suspended judgment. At any rate, there are still areas in Washington not far from the capitol where continued missionary work would do no harm. Nevertheless we certainly made progress. Early in 1937, the "Merry-Go-Rounders" stated in their widely circulated column that "the reason the Archives Building is filled with trash" was because the other government departments "will not surrender their precious and historic papers." But if those eminent operators in their snooping around the archives building had been a bit more thorough, they would have learned that at the very date their statement was published there were deposited in the building the official records of the United States Senate from 1789 to 1934, transfers from nine of the ten executive departments, from eighteen independent establishments, and from one United States court. Only the House of Representatives held out in stubborn conviction that its records would be safer and more easily accessible for use if left tied up with "the customary red tape," in unlabelled packages and jammed higgledy-piggledy in dark cubby-holes in the capitol and neighboring buildings than they would be if properly arranged,

labelled, described and listed in adequate finding mediums at the National Archives.

The "historic documents" conception of archives gave rise to what we may call the case of archives *vs.* library. Its origin may be found in a rhetorical expression in President Hoover's speech at the laying of the cornerstone of the archives building. "There will be aggregated here," he said, "the most sacred documents of our history—the originals of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States." After thus throwing the fat into the fire and without explaining how two documents can be "aggregated," Mr. Hoover slipped out of the capital city into the quieter life of Palo Alto.

On the basis of his statement, the Washington press built up the case of archives *vs.* library. It was surely a remarkable case—a case in which all the issues were feigned, all the allegations were fictions, and the parties of record were not the parties at interest. The parties at interest were reporters in search of a good "story" to enliven the dull seasons, the parties of record were alleged to be the National Archives and the Library of Congress. The case finally petered out because the parties of record refused to plead and left the parties at interest holding an exploded balloon.

After the opening of the archives building, one of Washington's stock questions was: "When will the Declaration and the Constitution be transferred to the archives?" Strange as it may seem, nobody would believe either the archivist or the librarian when they denied that any such transfer was under consideration. One Washington paper published a story under the headline, "Librarian Demurs to Archives Proposal to House Constitution," in which the archivist was represented as having "declined to comment on the matter saying that it was 'too ticklish'," and the librarian was credited with the incredible statement: "I think President Hoover made a mistake." And the unfortunate reporter could not explain how the librarian could "demur" to a "proposal" the archivist had never made.

But of course that was no way for two government hirelings to treat a good story and they should not be allowed to get away with it. Accordingly, another reporter, with his eye on his city editor, "scooped" his rival with a harrowing story of how the archivist and the librarian were locked "in a secret, bitter struggle," so bitter, indeed, "that Congress may have to decide the question."

Why worry about facts when fiction makes a better story? Imagination scorns facts; fiction alone is "creative writing." Perhaps it was that canon of art that induced two eminent Washington creative writers to give the story a free ride on their "Merry-Go-Round." Here it is:

> Nobody around the Archives Building will admit it, but the dust-proof vaults, intended to hold the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, are now filled chiefly with waste paper. "Historic documents cannot be moved until we have completed our burglar alarm system," explains the guide. But that is not the fact. Real truth is that Herbert Putnam, head of the Library of Congress, will not give them up. . . . In his disappointment, Archivist R. D. W. Connor has retreated in the background in the Archives management . . . and stands now a wistful and defeated figure.

I wonder if those two fellows ever learned how badly they had missed the boat. At any rate, the Washington correspondent of a paper printed far from the madding crowd of Washington beat them to it by a dozen nautical miles. This correspondent by painstaking research was able to reveal the real significance of the case of archives *vs.* library. The Roosevelt administration, he discovered,

> . . . was having another internal row over the United States Constitution. . . . Half the Administration says they [the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution] should be left where they are. . . . The other half says they should be placed in the Archives Building. . . . You see, it isn't just a matter of safe keeping. It's the old fight between the legislative and executive over the separation of authority. . . . The Library of Congress functions under the authority of Congress. The National Archives will come under the authority of the President.

Alas! there was no John Marshall to determine this weighty question of constitutional law.

Of course an infallible press must never be caught in error even when it is mistaken. One paper reported that the archivist and the librarian were about to spring "at each other's throat," and when they refused to spring some explanation was in order. A very eminent Washington commentator, upon the retirement of Dr. Putnam after forty years of distinguished service, revealed the secret. How he discovered it would baffle Ellery Queen himself. But here it is in plain black and white:

> The archivist of the United States never mobilized to obtain for the

> National Archives the original drafts of the Constitution of the United States and the Declaration of Independence because there was a sort of gentleman's agreement not to raid the Library of Congress, where they are now deposited, as long as Herbert Putnam was Librarian. Now that Putnam has made way for Archibald MacLeish, Congress wonders whether transfer of the Nation's most precious documents may not be imminent.

There you have it! The truth at last and I am happy to pass it on to the present archivist and the reigning librarian—gratis!

"Real truth is"—if I may be allowed to crib this brilliant bit of "picturesque patter" from the merry-go-bounders—"real truth is" there was no agreement, "gentleman's" or any other kind, and the librarian never refused to surrender "the nation's most precious documents" to the archivist because, if for no other reason, the archivist never asked him for them. The story is an example of "creative writing" in its snappiest mood.

The vision of the huge vaults in the archives building crammed with "trash" faded slowly and reluctantly disappeared when the major executive departments decided to entrust their "precious documents" to the tender care of the National Archives. The old line departments at first were naturally reluctant to turn their records over to this new and illy understood agency. Many of their officials, indeed, did not understand that their records if transferred to the archives would still be available for use. Moreover, they quite properly wanted to be assured that the archivist and his staff knew enough about their business to preserve their holdings and administer them efficiently. It all came back to a matter of a little education reinforced by some gentle outside pressure.

The State Department is, of course, the premier executive department of the government; its records rank first in public interest and in historical value. The department had long maintained its own efficient Archives Section as a repository for such of its records as had attained the dignity of archives. It had also been the most liberal of the departments in permitting the use of its archives for research purposes. When, therefore, an official of the department suggested that its records be transferred to the National Archives, his immediate superior was quoted as replying, "They will be transferred only over my dead body." Isn't it remarkable how many people one runs up with in government service who are ambitious of martyrdom in the interest of our Uncle Samuel? Nevertheless, the State Department's

records were transferred and, fortunately, that particular official has not yet qualified for a martyr's crown.

The National Archives can claim no particular credit for the gentle outside pressure which produced that result. That much must be conceded to the chairman of the House Committee on Expenditures in the Executive Departments, our first and hitherto most uncompromising critic. When the State Department's appropriation for the fiscal year 1937-1938 came before the House for consideration, he moved the elimination of an item of $1,700 for the repair and binding of records in the department's Archives Section. The National Archives, he said, had been established

> . . . to take care of just such documents . . . [and] the first documents that should have been turned over to the Archives are those that now rest in the State Department archives. . . . Here is a duplication of effort; just as clear a case as it is possible to present, . . . because in the State Department you have an archives doing exactly what was set out as a responsibility placed upon the National Archivist and the National Archives.

Shortly after this incident, George S. Messersmith, assistant secretary of state, told me that he had under consideration the matter of transferring to the National Archives all of the State Department's records prior to 1906. Anxious that he should not act without full knowledge of our facilities, I suggested to him the advisability of making a visit to the archives building before acting. He came, accompanied by Cyril Wynne, the department's liaison officer with the archives. After a thorough inspection of the building and equipment and of our methods of operation, Mr. Messersmith remarked, "Well, this answers all of our questions," adding that he was now ready to submit his recommendation to the Secretary of State. The recommendation was made and approved and the transfers were made during the fall of 1937.

At his next hearing before the House Appropriations Committee, Mr. Messersmith, reporting his action to the committee, said that he had gone into the matter very carefully and had "decided that in the Archives Building . . . our 'children' will be better cared for than we would be able to care for them in our own home. . . . I can say," he added, "in so far as my experience abroad is concerned, that the arrangements in the Archives Building, for the preservation and making accessible our archives are far better than those existing anywhere else in the world."

The affair of the State Department was easy sailing; the War Department was something else. We had frequently been assured that it would be our hardest nut to crack. "The War Department will never part with its records," chorused the ancient order of Job's Comforters. They left us no illusions, but we bided our time in confident assurance that some day opportunity would knock. It did knock, and it knocked with an importunity not to be denied.

On June 10, 1937, I was called to the White House. The President wanted to know how we were getting along. I gave him a brief report of progress and problems. He then asked if there was anything he could do to help. Clearly opportunity was knocking and I flung open the door. "Yes, Mr. President, perhaps you can persuade the War Department that holding on to its old records of an archival character is not necessary to the defense of the country." He wanted to know what I meant. I called his attention to the repeated complaints of the department over a period of half-a-century that it lacked the office space essential for its work and explained its tenacity in holding on to its old records that occupied space that could be better used for other purposes. By way of illustration, I cited the Confederate archives, thinking that no records could possibly have less value to the United States government for official purposes. He promptly replied that he would consult the Secretary of War about the matter and reaching for his memorandum pad scratched on it a "memory jogger."

Would he ever think of it again? I wondered. But there was no need to worry; my suggestion had struck a responsive cord not only in Franklin D. Roosevelt, the President, but also in Franklin D. Roosevelt, the historian. The historian allowed no grass to grow under his feet before dispatching to the secretary a memorandum asking to be advised whether it would not be advantageous to all concerned if the "Confederate Archives" were transferred to the custody of the archivist. The mention of the Confederate archives had evidently stimulated his historical imagination and completely blotted out all recollection of the other noncurrent records of the department. It also, as it happened, enabled the secretary to score a good point against us. In his reply to the President's inquiry, he said:

> One phase of this situation which I feel should receive your thoughtful consideration before any definite decision is made, is whether, as a broad question of public policy, it would be advisable to place the Confederate records in what is generally looked upon as the Nation's highest type of

> repository for records, while at the same time the records of the Union army . . . remain in less favored buildings. . . . Such preferential treatment of the records of those who so long engaged in armed opposition to the major portion of our now reunited country might easily form the basis of adverse criticism which it might not be well to invite unnecessarily.

The President sent the letter to me saying he thought the secretary had made "a pretty good case for keeping all the Civil War records together." However, he left the door open for further discussion by adding: "I wish you would . . . let me have your opinion as to what, if anything, we should do next." The implication of that "we" did not escape me, but it also put me on the spot and the only thing I could think of to say was that the secretary's point would lose its force if he "should see fit to adopt the suggestion that all the [Civil War] records" be transferred to the archives.

But that point was not the whole of the secretary's case. What floored me with amazement was his contention that the department must retain the custody of the archives of the defunct Confederacy because they were necessary to enable the Secretary of War of the United States to make "administrative decisions" required of him by law. Accordingly, he felt it to be his duty to recommend "that no steps be taken to divest the War Department of its custody or control of those records."

"What should we do next?" Certainly not attempt to meet the secretary on the front that he himself had chosen. Fortunately, he had left both of his flanks open and both were vulnerable. One was the physical condition of the records, the other, the building in which they were housed.

For our attack on the first we found a well stocked arsenal in the reports and orders of the secretary's predecessors over a period of forty years. These reports and orders were replete with such descriptive phrases referring to the records as "actually in tatters," "fast crumbling away," "so dilapidated" as to be practically useless, and our own surveys had disclosed the fact that these phrases were no exaggerations. Replying to the President's question, we pointed out that the War Department had no facilities and no experts for repairing these "tattered" documents and, quite modestly of course, called his attention to our own unexcelled equipment and expert personnel for that purpose. As luck would have it, only a week before the Secretary of War and the archivist opened their barrage over the

head of the President of the United States, the President had made a visit to the archives building and had been so favorably impressed with our repair work that he had sent to us for rehabilitation some of his own old and damaged manuscripts. His comment on the result was: "I have never seen such a fine piece of work." We cherished the hope, therefore, that on this phase of our sham battle the umpire's decision might well be anticipated.

The second flank was the building in which the records were housed. It was a garage—no, not an old abandoned garage, but a garage in daily use with all the appurtenances thereunto belonging—cars, trucks, busses, gasoline pumps, and vats for lubricating oil. Fire protection there was none. If our account of these conditions was not a masterpiece of "creative writing," at least it was an effective bit of factual description.

It turned the trick. The War Department capitulated. The secretary reconsidered his decision and agreed to adopt so much of the archivist's suggestion "as may properly be availed of without imposing legal limitations upon this Department and its duly constituted agencies and its statutory activities." A series of conferences followed, resulting in an arrangement satisfactory to all and the records were transferred in 1938. The nut had been cracked and nobody's thumb had been bruised.

Two years passed. The nation had launched its great defense program. The army was rapidly expanding and the War Department was again "sorely pressed" for space which could be found only by releasing "for other purposes" floor space used for departmental files. The secretary felt obliged "to solicit" the aid of the archivist "in carrying out the program of the President in connection with the preparation for the National Defense." Would the archivist take over the records and release the space so badly needed? The archivist would and did. The records were transferred and the department got its needed space.

I had just written that sentence, when the postman arrived bringing me a copy of the report of the archivist for the quarter ending June 30, 1942. My eye fell at once on the following passage:

> As in the preceding quarter the War Department records accessioned were greater in volume than those of any other agency. The transfer of a residual body of first World War Selective Service records, . . . marked the practical completion of the long process of solving the problem of what to do with some 136,000 cubic feet of such records in order to

release as far as possible, for war purposes, the large amount of floor space they had occupied.

For these and other war-time services, the National Archives, shortly after Pearl Harbor, was officially listed among the essential "defense agencies" of the United States government.

To bring this address to a close, it only remains that I perform a duty that you imposed upon me as your president a year ago when you elected to honorary membership in our Society the nation's most eminent amateur archivist. During my seven years of service as archivist of the United States, President Roosevelt's keen personal as well as official interest in the work of the National Archives was a constant source of encouragement and an ever present help in time of trouble. It was a great privilege, therefore, to be your agent for communicating your action to him and I now have the honor to lay before you his letter of acceptance.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

February 13, 1942.

My dear Dr. Connor:

May I tell you how very much honored I am by my election as an Honorary Member of the Society of American Archivists?

I need not tell you of my lifetime interest in the building up of archives throughout the nation—especially because of my own personal interest in the naval history phase and the local Dutchess County material.

At this time, and because of the condition of modern war against which none of us can guess the future, it is my hope that the Society of American Archivists will do all that is possible to build up an American public opinion in favor of what might be called the only form of insurance that will stand the test of time.

I am referring to the duplication of records by modern processes like the microfilm so that if in any part of the country original archives are destroyed, a record of them will exist in some other place.

This involves, of course, a vast amount of work because of the volume of federal, state and local archives of all kinds—but I think that a broad plan would meet with hearty public support if it could be properly publicized.

The Society can count on my continued support in the fine work which it is doing.

Always sincerely,

(Signed) FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

Dr. R. D. W. CONNOR, *President,*
The Society of American Archivists,
Chapel Hill, North Carolina

The suggestion of the President that this Society should "do all that is possible to build up an American public opinion in favor of what might be called the only form of insurance [for private and public records] that will stand the test of time," fits so neatly into our program at this meeting that one might suspect he had previous notice of it. I strongly recommend that this Society, at this meeting, consider and adopt suitable plans for putting our new member's suggestion into effect.

R. D. W. Connor

University of North Carolina

THE SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER 26 AND 27, 1942

ENTHUSIASTIC approval of local arrangements, the high caliber of the papers presented, genial program guidance by presiding chairmen, some lively discussions and the traditional hospitality of the Virginia State Library and historical Richmond, all combined to make the sixth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists at Richmond, Virginia, very enjoyable for the seventy-four registered attendants. Everyone felt special responsibility placed on him by the war conditions, and found inspiration and solutions for many problems in the enlightening interchange of ideas not only in the formal program, but also during discussions and informal conversations. Especially significant was the fact that everyone scheduled to take part in the program appeared despite current difficulties of travel.

R. D. W. Connor of the University of North Carolina, president of the Society, and chairman of the opening session, introduced Oliver W. Holmes of the National Archives, whose comprehensive paper formulated in a masterly way the foundation for the general subject of this panel, "Planning a Permanent Program for Federal Records in the States." After reviewing past practices and experiences of the government in caring for the records of its field offices, Mr. Holmes discussed in turn the advantages and disadvantages of (1) a system of regional archival depositories, (2) a system of federal-state depositories planned and supported co-operatively by the federal government and the states, and (3) the centralization in Washington of all field records of permanent value. As a measure for handling vast accumulations of records of field offices of New Deal and war agencies, likely to demand attention immediately at the close of the war, Mr. Holmes suggested the establishment of temporary centers where the records could be studied, reduced in bulk through selection and microfilming, arranged, described, and, if necessary, serviced. The knowledge and experience gained through this program would help to determine the nature, location, and size of permanent field depositories, should they prove necessary and desirable.

William D. McCain of the Mississippi Department of Archives

and History argued against a system of regional depositories and the further concentration of records in overcrowded cities. He expressed the hope that further study would be given to the possibilities of federal-state depositories, and pointed out some of the advantages of such decentralization as well as some of the difficulties that would have to be overcome. He endorsed Mr. Holmes' suggestion of temporary concentration centers "until we make up our minds."

Army field records were discussed by Captain Jesse S. Douglas of the Adjutant General's Office, War Department, formerly regional director of the Survey of Federal Archives for Oregon and Washington. He pointed out that local historians fail to realize the importance of the records of the executive departments in Washington and consequently have tended to overemphasize the value of field records and local depositories. Because of the army's organization and record system its field records are of relatively little use for historical purposes except in conjunction with War Department records, and Captain Douglas concluded that historical interests would best be served by centralizing them in Washington.

The hazards in war-time to records centralized in Washington were emphasized by Richard B. Morris, professor of history in the College of the City of New York. "We must plan our archival buildings not only for peace but for war-time as well," he said. Professor Morris felt that in most cases it is practicable to distinguish between records that might best be placed in a regional depository and those that ought to be centralized in Washington, and cited a number of examples of each type. He felt also that centralization was impossible because of the bulk of the field records, and discussed in detail problems presented in caring for enormous accumulations of court records which have high research value.

Lillian Kessler, of Washington, D.C., in charge of the disposition of Historical Records Survey product files in the states, announced that arrangements for their housing had generally been undertaken on a deposit basis by state or local officials, and that the final inventory would be forthcoming soon.

The Monday luncheon speaker, Gaston Litton of the National Archives, was introduced by William J. Van Schreeven of the Virginia State Library. Mr. Litton's paper, on "Record Problems and Responsibilities in the Canal Zone, Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico," painted a vivid word picture of his recent extended visit in these important outposts of the United States where he surveyed federal

records, considering their character, quantity, conditions, and degree of protection. Climatic conditions create a real problem in records storage in those areas. Mr. Litton described valuable records in the Canal Zone dating back as far as the French effort to build the canal. The Danish records of the Virgin Islands have already been brought to the National Archives. Many of the records of the Spanish régime in Puerto Rico have been lost by fire. In both these latter two territories there are valuable recent materials of considerable local interest.

Solon J. Buck, archivist of the United States, presided over the afternoon panel session under the general subject "Records Administration and the War." The first paper read was by Philip C. Brooks of the National Archives who emphasized the importance to archivists of the way in which records are originally created and filed. He described the records administration program of the National Archives, which is designed to assist in developing throughout the government principles and practices in filing, selection, and segregation that will facilitate the disposal of records or their transfer to the National Archives as they become noncurrent. He said that both current administrative and archival needs would best be served by the designation of a competent records officer in each agency of government, with adequate authority and staff to advise administrators in the planning of forms and procedures in order to prevent the creation of unnecessary papers and to have those that are created properly identified for record purposes; to study and apply filing schemes; to train the personnel doing mail and records work; and to know the bases of evaluation of records and to administer the whole records retirement program. He quoted Mr. Buck's statement that the fundamental objective of the National Archives "is to make the experience of the government and people of the United States as it is embodied in records of the federal government and related materials available to guide and assist the government and the people in planning and conducting their activities."

Lieut. Comdr. Willard F. McCormick, U.S.N.R., formerly of the Carnegie Illinois Steel Corporation, set forth many helpful ideas regarding the creation and control of records. He remarked that instead of people keeping records, records sometimes keep people—from essential war work. To prevent unnecessary records from coming into being, he propounded six questions which officials should ask themselves: "Why is the item needed? Who needs it? What will it

contain or consist of? When will it be required and how often? Where will it be prepared or distributed? How will it be prepared or produced?" He designated the first as most important. Following a discussion of this matter, he advised that forms should be kept to the standard sizes produced by the paper manufacturer and the manufacturers of files in order to avoid use of odd sizes and to save space. His statement that Donald Nelson approves the transaction of business by telephone as much as possible had repercussions in the remarks that followed the formal panel program.

Robert H. Bahmer, loaned to the Navy Department by the National Archives, gave an enlightening discourse on the disposition of records from the point of view of the agency. In the eight months since the first of February, the Navy Department has increased its filing cabinet space by almost a third. He emphasized the importance of surveys in government agencies to identify records, and of determinations as to which records are of temporary and which of permanent value. The following steps are necessary, he said: first, establish a standard of value; second, provide for regularity in the retirement and disposal of records and archives; third, give protection to valuable records retained; fourth, inform archival institutions as to what material they may expect to receive; fifth, provide a records officer with an inventory so that the reference service of the department may be made more available; and sixth, provide filing officials with a sound basis for formulation of classifications so that records may be sorted according to their value at their source.

The paper on "The Development of Adequate Records of War Administration" by Harry Venneman of the Committee on Records of War Administration, in the Bureau of the Budget, disclosed the plan of the federal government, through this committee, to provide adequate accounts of administrative activities in the war. A part of this program is to gather data on decisions of policy made orally that are not normally reflected in official records. The committee has staff members assigned to study current developments in each of several major fields of government activity. Mr. Venneman discussed the work of several federal agencies that have established historical officers within their organizations.

In the discussion that followed, Helen L. Chatfield, archivist of the Treasury Department, called attention to the need for incorporating in the official records memoranda implementing the formulation of policy, a type of document which is often retained in the

personal files of officials. Luther H. Evans, chief assistant librarian of Congress, spoke briefly of the library's collection of printed and processed material of the war. He said he hoped that the army and navy and other agencies would make available to the library their confidential issuances, under whatever restrictions might be necessary. He cautioned those writing histories of war activities that they should get all the facts before writing; otherwise their work would be inadequate. Fred W. Shipman, director of the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park, told how he is working to assure the completion of records of activities at the White House.

Voice recording equipment and the making of typed copies of phone conversations were topics about Mrs. Virginia Leddy Gambrell, of the Dallas Historical Society, inquired. Lieut. Comdr. McCormick stated that records of conversations could be filed and typed later when wanted. He said that the first of the records were aluminum, but that they have now been replaced by plastics. Replying to a question by Miss Rogers of Illinois State Library about filing the aluminum records which were apt to warp, he stated that in his department the flat discs are placed in envelopes and filed like correspondence.

Alexander Weddell, former ambassador to Spain and also past president of the Virginia Historical Society, who presided at the annual dinner on Monday evening opened the program with pleasant reminiscences. R. D. W. Connor, first archivist of the United States, gave in his presidential address a very interesting and informative history of the vicissitudes through which he successfully guided the National Archives for seven years.

Mr. Connor presided at the annual meeting and the following officers were elected for the coming year: president, R. D. W. Connor; vice president, Harold S. Burt; secretary, Lester J. Cappon; treasurer, Julian P. Boyd; and member of the council, Philip C. Brooks.

The Society was invited to visit the Virginia State Library on Tuesday morning where the staff very graciously conducted the members through its different departments and showed the efficient manner in which the state of Virginia is caring for its records.

The general subject of the Tuesday morning session, led by Julian P. Boyd, librarian of Princeton University, was the conservation of cultural resources. An informative paper was presented by Dan Lacy, executive secretary of the Committee on Conservation of Cultural

Resources, in which he pointed out that it is impossible to disassociate records relating to the war from those dealing with pre-war and post-war periods and contemporary materials relating to normal activities. He felt that the collection of materials should not be connected with the writing of state war histories, and that it could best be accomplished by existing agencies having the facilities for the housing and care of records. He outlined six principles that should govern any program for the collection and preservation of research materials.

William D. Overman, executive secretary of the Ohio War History Commission, presented the second paper of the morning on the subject "State and Local Program for the Collection of World War II Records." He gave to those present an interesting pamphlet which his commission is using to obtain co-operation from individuals and institutions. The governor appointed a commission of about twenty people which included state officials, history professors, the state historian of the D.A.R., librarians, and newspaper men. The governor authorized emergency appropriations and the chairman has delegated responsibility to local historical agencies. Newspapers are being used for instructions and publicity. Radio stations are co-operating in their programs and are also preserving scripts relative to the war. The state Council of Defense has subscribed to a clipping service, and a scrapbook of clippings is being compiled. Each regional director keeps a file. A system for indexing and cataloguing as soon as material comes into the office has been devised. Copies of all pamphlets printed by the state defense council, camp newspapers, and publications of federal and state departments are among those being collected. All of this material will be transferred to the state archives at the end of the war.

In the ensuing discussion problems of federal records outside of Washington were discussed. Kenneth E. Colton of the Iowa Department of History and Archives asked what authority could be given a record supervisor to compel an agency to follow suggestions. Mr. Robinton of New York, aware of the need for prompt action, asked if the National Archives could deputize individuals in the states to supervise the assembling and care of official records. Dr. Buck made the statement that he has no authority over current record practices of federal agencies except to inspect, personally or by deputy, any records in the United States. He might deputize state officials to inspect federal records.

Dorsey W. Hyde of the National Archives, recommended that printing plants throughout the country be asked for copies of war-time publications, and that broadcasting stations be requested to keep copies of all of their scripts pertaining to the war. Replying to an inquiry by Mrs. John Trotwood Moore, state librarian of Tennessee, as to how the expenses of collection are being met in Ohio, Mr. Overman said that in addition to the appropriation made by the state government the services of a large number of volunteer workers were available as the result of an appeal which had been made on the basis that this assistance was a patriotic duty. Mr. Robinton of New York suggested that school children might help. He proposed contests, possibly in map making. Mr. Buck stated that the laymen should be impressed with the importance of this work so that a complete picture of this war will be recorded. Mr. Colton stressed the importance of soldiers' letters, and the need of impressing upon the service men that their reports and diaries are valuable. It was reported that Dartmouth and other colleges are collecting letters written by their alumni in the armed services.

Mrs. Elleine H. Stones, chief of the Burton Historical Collection in the Detroit Public Library, told of the many service men stationed in and around Detroit who are making extensive use of their genealogical records. Dorothy C. Barck of the New York Historical Society called attention to the fact that posters, leaflets, and newspapers will not last long unless paper is good or mounted or microfilmed. Social organizations in every state should be encouraged to preserve their own war records, advised Mr. Cappon.

At the Tuesday noon luncheon session Earl G. Swem, librarian of William and Mary College, presided, introducing Randolph W. Church of the Virginia State Library. In Mr. Church's paper on "The Relationship between Librarians and Archivists" he stated that the older records become the less likely they are to be referred to for their record status, and the more they become source material held for educational value. Therefore, "it is very definitely open to question whether such material should be filed and housed in the order in which received or even with material from the same agency of file." He approved the use of the dictionary card catalogue and recommended study of the field of serial cataloguing. He set forth that an archivist should be an administrative official in the broad field of education, subject minded, with a technical training in the fields of records and record making, as well as a sound basic training in

the principles of cataloguing and bibliography. Essentially, he is, even as the librarian, a custodian of knowledge and not of records.

The Town Hall session on Tuesday afternoon was presided over by Vernon D. Tate of the National Archives, and the first speaker, W. Edward Keegan, read an instructive paper on "Papers, Carbons and Ribbons." He said that until controversy between paper technologists comparing the longevity of chemically purified wood fiber and rag fiber paper is settled he recommended that 100 per cent rag paper be used for making permanent records. For transitory records, care should be exercised to select paper that is no more than adequate. At the National Archives a survey of the use requirements was made, and selection of the most suitable type of paper for various records has resulted in an estimated saving of 25 to 30 per cent in cost. He advised adapting the size of a record for specific uses to the stock sizes of paper, a list of which may be found in a Department of Commerce publication numbered R-22-40 entitled "Paper (Basic Sheet Sizes)." He pointed out that carbon papers and typewriter ribbons that employ carbon black for ink base display a fine degree of permanence. He recommended the following treatment to prevent smudging of carbon copies: Mix 25 grams of corn starch with a small amount of cold water and add this to a liter of boiling water. When cool pour the solution into a photographic tray, saturate the paper to be treated in the solution, drain, blot on the reverse side and set aside to dry. When nearly dry flatten and dry by application of heat and pressure.

The second afternoon paper on "Restoration Methods" was given by W. J. Barrow, of the Virginia State Library, who stated that acidity in paper is the chief cause of deterioration. He explained the methods used in preparing records for the laminating process and suggested that a special chemical bath previous to laminating would effectively neutralize the acids which have developed in paper through years of use, and would fill the paper so that the lamination process would make it practically indestructible. He stated that silking deteriorates within twenty or twenty-five years due to microorganisms in the silk. Acetate foil used in lamination increases tear resistance. In a seventy-two hour accelerated aging test, a silked sample lost 52 per cent of its folding endurance and a laminated sample lost 31 per cent.

Mrs. Gambrell presented a paper on "Housing and Storage of Records" which was confined to a discussion of the different types of

filing equipment, vertical and horizontal. She suggested that a comprehensive history of the types of filing equipment which have been marketed in the United States would be a reference tool most useful to archivists. She also stated that for the past year the Society's special committee on filing equipment has been making a survey of the archival filing equipment currently manufactured and state archivists will shortly receive from the committee a detailed questionnaire on their methods of physical storage. She asked for co-operation on the part of all officials having the care and protection of records.

Morris L. Radoff, archivist of Maryland, then read a paper on "Misuses of Microphotography." Among the difficulties he cited in the application of microphotography were the problem of teaching people to read the films, inability to accommodate two people who want to use the same roll at the same time, and eye strain caused by continuously watching the film. The impossibility of providing a sufficient number of readers and the inability to get microfilm cameras at present because of war regulations were also mentioned. Mr. Radoff's experience in trying to microfilm or photocopy repaired material has proved unsatisfactory.

In the discussion which followed, Margaret C. Norton, archivist of Illinois, expressed her belief that microfilming is the solution to the problem of storage, and said that it had been used in their tax department. She also spoke of the need for a type of reader for microfilm which will allow comparison of material contained on two or more films. Mr. Tate said that experimentation was in process with a multiple projection head which would take care of just such a situation, but that thus far its cost is beyond the reach of most institutions. Mr. Swem suggested microprinting, a recent development in flat printing, as a solution to the problem.

At the close of the afternoon meeting the Society was given a much-appreciated complimentary tea by the hotel.

For their final meeting the archivists joined the American Association for State and Local History on Tuesday evening. The speaker was Mr. H. J. Eckenrode of the Virginia Conservation Commission, who discussed the subject "War History from Local Newspapers."

Harold S. Burt

Connecticut State Library

THE OHIO WAR HISTORY COMMISSION[1]

DECEMBER 7, 1941, was the signal for most of us to begin serious consideration of the problem of the preservation of war records. Some of you had already begun such collections. At the meeting of the American Historical Association last December in Chicago, we discussed with Dean Carl Wittke of Oberlin College the advisability of beginning the collection of the war records in Ohio at once, so that certain materials of value might be preserved which might otherwise be lost if the task were postponed until after the war. Dean Wittke agreed, for he had worked on a similar project during the first World War when Prof. A. M. Schlesinger, then chairman of the history department at Ohio State University, headed an Ohio Historical Commission. Dean Wittke wrote Governor John W. Bricker early in January, 1942, suggesting that the governor appoint a commission. This suggestion was well received. The governor consulted H. C. Shetrone, director, and Harlow Lindley, secretary of the state historical society and sent letters of appointment to twenty Ohioans representing various geographical areas of the state, most of whom are history professors; but the list also includes two newspapermen, a university president, the state historian of the D.A.R., two or three historical society secretaries, and the Ohio chairmen of the American Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. All responded favorably to the governor's request that they serve on the Ohio War History Commission (as it was officially designated) and a meeting was called for April 1 in Columbus. At that time the commission elected Dr. Wittke chairman, Prof. Francis P. Weisenburger of Ohio State University vice-chairman, and your speaker as executive secretary.

The director and trustees of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society agreed that I should give the necessary time from regular duties to the direction of this project, and headquarters were established at the Ohio State Museum. The governor authorized an emergency appropriation for the remainder of 1942 to provide for necessary secretarial help, needed stationery, supplies, travel, and postage. This was approved by the Board of Control and by June we had a *Bulletin* in print describing the aims and purposes of the commission, and a competent secretary at work.

[1] A paper read at the sixth annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists, at Richmond, Virginia, on October 26, 1942.

Considerable thought was given to the organization of the work in the early stages and some correspondence was carried on with Dr. Lester Cappon, and others, who were familiar with the results of the work of similar commissions in the first World War. We were aware of the fact that many commissions at that time were political in their makeup and although they may have collected some material of value, it was often dispersed, so that little if any of it got into permanent collections. We were fortunate in Ohio in that the material of the Schlesinger committee was housed in the library of the state historical society. Some consideration was given to the advisability of completely decentralizing the work of the commission by having local historical agencies assume the responsibility for collecting material in their respective communities. But since many—I might say most—of the forty or fifty historical societies of Ohio are inactive, it was decided that a chairman should be selected for each of Ohio's eighty-eight counties, with the central guidance in Columbus.

In many cases the county chairman is the secretary or president of an active local or regional historical society. In other cases we have selected an individual known for his interest in local history whether or not he has an institutional connection. Some of them are newspapermen; some are high school and college history teachers; and many are county-seat librarians. We chose the librarians in many counties where there was no known local historian, with the thought that the librarian was familiar with the handling of such material, and that much of it naturally gravitated toward the public library. The librarian also has a place for the deposit of the source material until such a time as it may be moved to the central depository. In this connection, we should explain that we consider the collections of the Ohio War History Commission to be official, and the material, as it comes in, becomes part of the state archives.

The State Council of Defense was contacted early in the development of the program with the definite understanding that all of the records of that council would be transferred lock, stock, and barrel to the state archives at the end of the emergency. However, upon examination it was revealed that the State Council of Defense was not maintaining a complete file of its own bulletins and some of its other publications. Out of 103 communiques issued by that agency up to June, for instance, more than half a dozen were completely "out of stock." We therefore requested that they put the War History Commission on the mailing list for all publications so that we

can be assured of having a complete file of such material as issued. Duplicates may be discarded later. I might add that since the State Council of Defense communiques were mimeographed, it was possible for us to have additional copies of the ones that were "out of stock" re-run for our files. This is to indicate that we have a very close working arrangement with the state council, although we are in no sense an integral part of it.

We have followed the policy of encouraging local historical societies, where they maintain a manuscript library or archives, to collect war records normally as a part of the source material of their community; and we have assured them that we will assist them in every way possible and will not request the transfer of this material to the central depository at the close of the war. In other words, we will bring together the material from counties where there is no institution which can properly service it, but in several instances strong local societies or college libraries will maintain their county files permanently, if they so desire. In this respect we are emulating the principle laid down by Pennsylvania where there is apparently complete decentralization in the collection of war records by local historical societies.

It might be well to mention here what some of the other states are doing. Although we have made no attempt by a survey to ascertain the number of states engaged in this work, we have by correspondence become acquainted with the activities in a number of them. Similar programs are in operation in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, New Mexico; and they are planned if not actually in operation in North Carolina, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Michigan. In Minnesota, to cite one example, the work got under way several months ago, and they have effected a close working arrangement with the State Council of Defense. In fact, the director of the War Records Commission uses their publication for the dissemination of such instructions and information as he wishes to get across to the local civilian defense workers who, in turn, act as representatives for the collection of war records in the various communities.

In our state we have encouraged the county chairmen to effect such local organization as they deem best for their particular situations, and in some counties our chairmen have appointed committees consisting of ten or a dozen persons to help them in the work. In one county, for example, the committee consists of a clergyman, a high school history teacher, the county agricultural agent, the public li-

brarian, a representative of industry, a newspaperman, and the chairman of the local defense council. In another county where we have a librarian as county chairman, she has appointed a committee of persons representing each township in the county in order to effect as complete a coverage as possible. Elsewhere in Ohio, chairmen are either undertaking the work themselves or have so far appointed but one or two people to assist them.

In the early stages, we considered the advisability of drafting a manual of instructions for our workers in addition to our printed *Bulletin* which describes the kinds of material we wish to collect. We gave up this idea because we did not feel competent to sit down and write a manual which would solve in advance all the problems that might arise in the prosecution of such a task; and because we saw that a considerable number of supplementary bulletins or personal letters would have to be written to keep such a manual up-to-date. We therefore hit upon the plan of sending out our instructions in the form of a mimeographed bulletin or news letter. At this stage our secretary, Mrs. Ruth Joseph Fischer, suggested the Ohio War History Commission *Communikay,* which we issue once a month and which not only serves the purpose of issuing instructions and answering the questions which arise in the minds of our workers, but also affords us a means of reporting upon the progress of the work generally. In other words, the *Communikay,* edited by Mrs. Fischer, is a combination newspaper and instruction sheet. We feel this to be very successful, not only because we have received a good many favorable comments upon it, but because our workers are apparently getting the idea and are not continually writing in asking us to explain over and over again some of the most simple procedures.

The travel fund in our budget has permitted us to make several trips over the state, and we find that our county chairmen are, for the most part, extremely interested in the work and are laying the groundwork for the collection of much valuable material. I do not wish to take the time here to go into any detail as to the kinds of material we are collecting. For those who are interested we have available for distribution some issues of our *Communikay* which outline in detail some of the many accessions to date. However, we might say that the bulk of the material we are receiving at present is largely of an official nature from the various state departments, commissions, and bureaus showing their activities in the war; as well as files of some twenty-five or thirty camp newspapers where Ohio

selectees are in training. We have, of course, all of the material from the State Council of Defense and all of the material in the way of posters and other publications of several of the federal agencies. Radio scripts and transcriptions are among other source materials coming in regularly, and we have two films dealing with Ohio in the war. We have not secured, to date, any appreciable number of soldiers' letters or diaries; but we feel that we are acquainting the people of Ohio through publicity with the fact that the commission is in existence and that when the time comes for private letters, pictures, and diaries to be turned over, they will know where they ought to be deposited.

We have used newspapers and radio as mediums for our publicity. Our best radio publicity to date was a fifteen-minute program over station WGAR in Cleveland when Governor Bricker spoke on behalf of our commission in acceptance of a series of twenty-three radio transcriptions from WGAR. The transcriptions, originally made last year, tell the story of the average Ohio trainee from the time of his induction until his assignment to actual combat duty. A member of our commission, Elbert J. Benton, secretary of the Western Reserve Historical Society, spoke on this program also and it was a most successful ceremony. Along the same line of radio publicity, we plan to write spot announcements concerning the Ohio War History Commission and will send copies of these announcements to every radio station in the state with the request that they use them as frequently as possible. We also have had considerable newspaper publicity throughout the state, and subscribe to a clipping service which enables us to keep a close check on our coverage.

The question no doubt will arise in many minds as to what we are doing regarding clippings. We have never been enthusiastic over the collection of clippings from newspapers, especially since the library of the Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society contains complete files of some 160 papers which are representative of all sections of the state. We would have much preferred, if it were feasible, to put a group of people to work preparing an index to items pertaining to the war in those files, but since the WPA no longer affords the army of workers necessary for such a task, it seems out of the question. We have therefore relegated the clipping business to our county chairmen and have suggested that each of them maintain for his own locality a scrapbook (arranged chronologically) or a clipping file (by subject). We have, of course, been careful to instruct them

to keep only local material so that there would be the smallest possible amount of duplication. The State Council of Defense subscribed to a huge clipping service which is chiefly of interest to them in determining the amount and distribution of publicity for certain stories which emanate from the state office. However, much of this material would be useful to the future investigator if it were available. We worked out a plan with the WPA whereby a battery of workers was put to work mounting these clippings on 5 by 8 inch cards and filing them by subject. This file will not contain all of the news items on Ohio in the war, but it will afford ready access to such material as comes in on this clipping service.

And now a final word as to the manner of handling the material which comes into the state headquarters of the Ohio War History Commission. It is accessioned, catalogued, and filed by subject. Our accession record is similar to that used by most libraries. The items, after receiving an accession number, are given a classification number. The latter is the result of a simple system which we devised ourselves, whereby we adapt the standard library Cutter system to our needs. We file the material in vertical files under subject headings, a list of which appeared in an issue of our *Communikay* so that our coworkers are acquainted with our system of filing and can adopt a similar plan for filing clippings or for arranging other material which comes to their hands.

Our aim has been to assimilate and properly handle the material as soon as it comes into our office, for we certainly do not want to begin piling material into cartons. We want, instead, to have it ready for use by the investigator not only as soon as the emergency is over but, if possible, at the present time. We were fortunate to have a secretary who not only takes care of correspondence, but edits the *Communikay* and supervises the accessioning and cataloguing. We have one WPA cataloguer who had been on the state library project, and we have one NYA worker, a history major, who does excellent work, in addition to a volunteer worker who is doing some graduate work at the university and has agreed to work for us several hours a week.

We do not have all the answers and there are many more kinds of material which we ought to be receiving. I hope that the discussion here will give me some ideas as to other types of material which we can go after upon my return to Ohio.

William D. Overman

Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

EDWARD F. ROWSE, Editor
The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Historical Units of Agencies of the First World War, by Elizabeth B. Drewry. *Bulletins* of the National Archives, Number 4. (Washington, D.C. July, 1942. Pp. 31.)

The publication by the National Archives of Miss Drewry's study of the organization and activities of the historical units of government agencies during the first World War is indeed timely. Although admittedly not an exhaustive treatment of the subject, the study is sufficiently complete and revealing to make it required reading for the large number of administrative analysts and official historians currently engaged in recording the war-time experience of the federal government. Since the work of these analysts and historians is justified principally on the grounds that the record which they compile will be valuable, now and later, to administrators and others, they should, by the same token, be more than casually interested in a record of the experience of their predecessors.

Miss Drewry's study reveals clearly a number of shortcomings in the official historical activity of the first World War that deserve emphasis because of their pertinency to the problems of today.

First: the lack of co-ordination of effort. The State, War, and Navy Departments, the U. S. Shipping Board, the U. S. Fuel Administration and the several other agencies that did more than pay lip service to the historical program, each defined objectives and devised procedures without reference to the plans of the others and without benefit of a central guiding authority. This deficiency has been met in large part today by the formation of the Committee on Records of War Administration; but only in part since the committee's activity is restricted to the field of administrative history. There is a genuine need for the extension of over-all planning to all fields of historical interest as well as to the more prosaic problems of records management.

Second: failure to keep the historical programs within the limits of what reasonably could be accomplished. In the War and State Departments, particularly, the planners failed to keep their feet on the ground, and as a result accomplishments were less than they should have been.

Third: failure to define clearly and at the outset the scope and nature of the projected official histories. Whether these were to be collections of selected documents or formal narrative histories was a question unresolved in most cases until the war was over. Today in many of the historical projects, emphasis is placed on the current analysis and reporting of administrative

activity. This kind of history writing, which often takes the place of and presumably is superior to the ordinary reporting of government agencies, forestalls many of the criticisms usually levelled against "official" histories.

Fourth: failure to deal effectively with the problem of records. Although all agencies, according to Miss Drewry, recognized the importance of keeping an adequate record of their activities, there is no evidence that any agency gave thought to the problem of controlling the volume of records, and, except for the operational records accumulated by the War and Navy Departments, there was little planning for the future storage and organization of the files.

The facilities of the National Archives should solve the problem of future storage, but control of volume cannot be accomplished without energetic and intelligent action on the part of the producing agencies. Two methods of attack, not necessarily alternate, are being applied to this phase of the records problem. In some quarters the official historians are planning the establishment of selected bodies of records to contain the important, the policy making documents of permanent value. Such a program implies that the file room "files" are to be given secondary consideration and left to shift for themselves; it also raises a host of procedural difficulties concerning the mechanics of obtaining and handling the records to be placed in the special files. In other agencies efforts are being made to keep the regular files within manageable limits by prompt elimination of the routine, ephemeral and unimportant materials. The latter efforts are sponsored by the archivists and the records officers. Considerably more could be accomplished if these two groups, the official historians and the records officers, pooled their resources and experience for a joint attack on the problem.

Robert H. Bahmer

The Navy Department

Photographic Reproduction for Libraries, A Study of Administrative Problems, by Herman H. Fussler. (Chicago, Illinois. The University of Chicago Press, 1942. Pp. 218.)

The last decade has witnessed a rapid rise of interest in the general field of microphotography. To many individuals engaged in library, archival, and allied fields, the process of miniature photographic reproduction seemed to offer a universal solvent for their ever increasing snarl of problems. But like the alchemists of the Middle Ages, the universal solvent proved to be at least in some cases a will-o'-the-wisp. In solving certain problems it created others which were equally perplexing.

The realization of the limitations of microfilming marked the start of its true usefulness. That this goal might be more easily accomplished and to prevent a discrediting of the whole field through misdirected zeal a textbook for the librarian has been needed. Mr. Fussler has to a considerable extent sup-

plied the information needed by the non-technical user of microphotography in the library field.

Although the volume is primarily designed as an aid to librarians, it will prove useful to all those who are confronted with problems of reproduction, preservation, and security of records in the broadest sense of the terms. In the preface Mr. Fussler carefully limits the scope of his work as pertaining "to those matters which might affect library policy and to those fundamental problems which a library administrator must face when considering the use or the production of photographic reproductions." He has avoided detailed discussions of the technical problems of photography and has wisely confined most of his contribution to the results of his own experimentation in the Department of Photographic Reproduction of the University of Chicago Libraries. Thus the material presented is based on first hand information and may well serve as a guide for those engaged in similar fields.

Mr. Fussler has divided his treatment of the subject into two general sections: Part I, The Bibliographic Aspects of the Problem; and Part II, The Technical Aspects of the Problem. Part I is designed to give the reader a broad and rather general background, while Part II contains factual information and technical suggestions relevant to the arrangement, equipment, and operation of a microphotographic laboratory and library. There is also included a selected bibliography and a selected list of sources of equipment and supplies for photographic reproduction, as well as a useful index.

Throughout the volume Mr. Fussler has treated his subject with guarded enthusiasm and although he has sought to present an impartial study, it is evident that at least to his way of thinking the solution to many problems which confront the record and library administrator may be found in microphotography. The volume is a distinct contribution and will be more than useful in directing the administrator along sound paths of better service.

HUGH M. FLICK

Washington, D.C.

Notes on Preservation of Records, issued by the Imperial Record Department, New Delhi, 1941. (Simla. Government of India Press, 1941.)

This publication consists of a series of four articles concerned with the subject of restoring and fumigating records and papers and has been prepared by the Imperial Record Department of India for circulation among the archivists and librarians of that country for the comments and criticisms which it contains. The notes and extracts are from discussions which took place at the Baroda session of the Indian Historical Records Commission in 1941.

The first of the articles consists of extracts from the proceedings of the meeting wherein the problems of restoration and fumigation are posed without debate, and attention is called to the causes of deterioration and the fact that restoration is being done both by the use of the silking and lamination

processes. Something of the relative cost of these methods is given together with the cost of fumigation by the vacuum chamber method.

The second of the articles is a note by Dr. B. S. Baliga wherein he opposes the use of lamination and suggests a cheaper method of fumigation than that of the vacuum chamber. The arguments advanced in this note are answered in detail by Dr. S. N. Sen in the third article. The chief interest of the publication to United States readers consists of the accuracy of the questions and answers in this debate.

Dr. Baliga's objections to the lamination of documents center chiefly around the belief that the process is an extremely technical one which subjects material to physical and chemical changes the full purport of which cannot be determined by laboratory test, and that the process has not been in use long enough to see what natural results will obtain. His argument is bolstered by opinions from various individuals and agencies connected with English archives. Since this same argument is still being advanced in the United States by honest objectors it is extremely interesting to note how thoroughly and efficiently it is answered by Dr. Sen who apparently has gone further than most archivists in his study of these problems.

Of the points made by Dr. Baliga one at least is based on a misunderstanding of the chemical nature of cellulose acetate foil which he mistakenly believes to be closely related to such nitrate products as celluloid, and the others are made either in ignorance or disbelief in the conclusions reached by the full tests conducted by the U. S. Bureau of Standards. (See "Protection of Documents with Cellulose Acetate Sheeting," by B. W. Scribner, printed in 1941 as National Bureau of Standards Misc. Publication M168 and reviewed in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST, IV (1941), 200-201.) Dr. Sen is careful to point out in his rebuttal the significance of these tests which have clearly indicated the stability, legibility, and freedom from distortion found in the laminated document. He adds further evidence to the validity of this method of restoration by citing the full approval given to it by the archaeological chemist of India. Later developments in the field, including the process of removing the acid condition from old papers as used in the archives of Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, and Georgia are too new to have entered into the discussion.

In the matter of comparative costs Dr. Sen is again able to show that Dr. Baliga's conclusions both as to the cost of lamination and fumigation by the vacuum chamber method are in error. These conclusions were based largely on the initial cost of the machinery necessary to put the processes in operation, and did not take into account the relative cheapness of materials used and the vast amount of labor and time saved with these newer methods. This taken together with the superior ends achieved in both processes seem to justify conclusively Dr. Sen's opinion that they are sound, efficient, and reliable and worthy of institution wherever possible.

The final article in the publication consists of a note by Mr. K. Sitrama Iyer on a new "sulph-arsenical insecticide" which he considers of importance in controlling the ravages of insects. This chemical as used by him is applied in solution to that part of the book "between the covers and the first leaf" and is believed by him to be both economical and effective. No comments by others on the treatment are printed. It would appear, however, that before adoption such a method should be subject to such rigid tests as have been applied to lamination to determine possible deleterious effects the solution might have upon paper thus treated. In all new procedures archivists in general should be aware of how the laboratory can aid their efforts by subjecting paper to accelerated aging tests and noting such results as changes in Alpha cellulose content, copper number, pH, and folding endurance.

The papers in this publication are of considerable interest and value and provide, within the limitations of their lack of knowledge of the newest procedures, as good a general discussion of the pros and cons of lamination and vacuum chamber fumigation as are available with the pros coming off an easy winner.

W. J. Barrow

Virginia State Library

Procedure Manual for Records Management. (Washington. United States Department of Agriculture, Office of Plant and Operations, September, 1942. Pp. 16, and 28 exhibits.)

The Communications Division of the Office of Plant and Operations in the Department of Agriculture is one of the few units of organization operating at the central departmental level, whose duties lie wholly within the field of record administration. The present manual was prepared by this division in fulfillment of the duty of the department to provide for "the orderly custody and preservation" of its records, and is meant to be used as a guide by the Communications and Records Units attached to the various bureaus and offices, in the "maintenance and control of correspondence and related records." The basic procedures described in the manual are designed "to establish a uniform system of records management operations in the Department." While it is admitted that absolute uniformity may not be feasible, it is suggested that "it is possible to effect basic uniformity in methods of operation."

In sixteen pages of text, with the aid of some twenty-eight exhibits consisting of pictures, forms, outlines, and schedules, there are clearly and simply explained the various procedures comprising a complete and well-rounded system, in which every essential need seems to have been provided for. One gets the impression of an orderly and intelligent designer striving for simplicity.

Notable among the features of this system is the classification plan, called by its inventors the "Subject-Numeric System." It comprises certain "primary subjects" arranged in alphabetical order; while subordinate to each primary

subject and arranged as nearly as possible in alphabetical order, are the "secondary subjects," to which are assigned "numerical suffixes." In like manner, the subdivision of the secondary subjects are arranged thereunder as nearly as possible in alphabetical order, and assigned numbers. The arrangement of the folders in the file drawers conforms to this plan. By way of example, if one wished to find the file on "overtime," under this system, the code would be "Personnel—12—2," the classification outline indicating "Personnel" as the primary subject, "Hours of duty" as the secondary subject, and "overtime" as the tertiary subject. A "relative index" is included so that all the secondary and tertiary subjects may be readily located.

Under this classification system, the primary subjects vary in scope, their choice as primary subjects depending upon the degree of activity of the agency with respect to the subject matter involved. Where there is a great deal of activity resulting in the accumulation of record material on many of the phases of subject matter, proper correlation might result in fourth, fifth, and sixth degrees of subordination. In such a case, the primary subject is broken down into its more specific parts, which are made into new primary subjects. Thus, logical classification is kept down to the minimum, alphabetical classification being substituted as it becomes more intensive.

Another outstanding feature of the system recommended here is the manner of arranging the material within a subject classification, called "continuity filing." It provides for the assembling in chronological order of all correspondence and papers relating to a specific transaction. These are fastened together and kept apart from the chronological subject file, but are included therein by means of "continuity reference forms."

In the opinion of the present reviewer the standards set forth in this procedure manual are so far above the prevailing standards of government record keeping, that its careful perusal is recommended to all who are confronted with problems in this field. While there may be reservations in the minds of some, with reference to certain parts of the plan and its applicability to all types of material, certainly this manual is one of the best that has yet been produced, and may be considered a mile-stone on the way to the establishment of higher standards in what has been called the "low-pressure area" of public administration.

Helen L. Chatfield

U. S. Treasury Department

The Year's Work in Archives, by Irene J. Churchill, N. Dermott Hunt, and Hilary Jenkinson. (London, British Records Association, 1942. Pp. 37.)

American archivists who have been wondering about the impact of the war upon public records activities in England will find answers to many of their questions in this interesting publicaton. While the authors point out that

they "have been able only to give a few examples of current happenings not (as we would have liked to do) a complete summary," nevertheless they have succeeded in presenting an interesting and thought-provoking account of English experience many aspects of which are not without significance to the American archivist.

Strangely enough, the nation-wide paper salvage campaign seems to have been the starting point in England of a movement which is having widespread effect in making the general public more archives conscious. In this connection some three hundred representatives in localities scattered throughout the country have been appointd "to offer gratuitous help whenever a custodian desires advice as to what he ought or ought not to keep." For the information of the Regional Commissioners for Civilian Defense there has been published a directory of places where records of all kinds are or might be stored. Finally a pamphlet entitled "First Aid to Manuscripts," in a succession of forms, has been published by the Law Society, summarized in Church Papers, issued by the British Records Association Bulletin and circulated generally to public departments.

Public education through professional groups seems to be developing rapidly. Lawyers are being appointed to membership on committees concerned with record evaluation and members of the clergy are being put in personal touch with their local depository and its work. In this latter connection widespread public interest was created by the scheme for the microphotographing of early parish registers of which more than a thousand parishes availed themselves before the end of the spring of 1940. This undertaking has brought to light new material, such as sixteenth century paper registers, and has demonstrated "That in many Parishes the storage arrangements are or have been such as to make the survival of the Records a miracle."

The rapid development of local interest in the problem of records preservation has been greatly helped, also, by the activities of such agencies of governments as the county councils. These bodies have authorized the expenditure of public funds for the duplication of records and they have accepted responsibility for the care of thousands of historical documents such as deeds and local court rolls. Local depositories of all types, record offices, archaeological societies, libraries, and museums have also accepted the responsibility for records preservation and have taken in large quantities of church and family records.

The local advisory groups, mentioned above, have stood ready at all times to advise with government agencies, professional or business firms, and private families regarding the value of particular types of documents or groups of records. This development has placed new emphasis upon the problem of appraising both public and private records. Public records covered by the Record Office Act are appraised by inspecting officers who prepare and submit disposal schedules to Parliament. Under war-time conditions the normal pro-

cedure has been modified to permit the destruction of "useless" records before expiration of the specified retention period provided the inspecting officers have first been consulted.

The new emphasis upon the disposal of "useless" and the safe preservation of valuable records has resulted in an increased interest in records duplication by microphotography. A comprehensive scheme, planned and financed in the United States, for the microphotographing of important manuscript and other material in British collections, was started during 1941. This scheme, which is directed by the American Council of Learned Societies, sponsored by the Library of Congress, and financed by the Rockefeller Foundation, is designed (1) to develop a permanent film library of British research material in the United States and (2) to safeguard such material from the present risk of war-time destruction.

The facts thus far outlined would seem to prove that, without question, there has been a widespread development in England of public interest and concern regarding both public and private records. Our next question relates to the archival profession, as such, and the extent to which its growth has been affected by war-time conditions. In this connection the report reveals a state of affairs in 1942, as regards archival work, which is much more cheerful than most British archivists would have dared to anticipate in 1939. Many members of the profession then thought that depletion of staff and economies in expenditure, inevitable in war-time, would kill it, but although hard hit, the authors report that "we find no lack of interest in the technique of the profession, plenty of local institutions somehow managing to carry on, and even occasionally fresh posts created and fresh appointments made."

The big problem, from the professional point of view, has been providing for the safekeeping of the records. This aim is being met primarily through evacuation which has most often taken the form of dispersal, sometimes abroad and sometimes to safer storage areas in England. Because of this action there has been enormous disturbance of the pre-war location of records which are now scattered far and wide about the country. This dispersal has greatly complicated the problem of repair as well as that of archival reference service. In general, it is pointed out, repair work has been much curtailed, but, although reference service is restricted and more complicated, nevertheless every effort is being made to make records available for scholarly as well as for official use. Accession of records as previously pointed out, "persists steadily in spite of the War," but the work of arrangement and identification has necessarily suffered. In the field of publications there have been some delays but the comparatively few instances of suspension are more than counterbalanced by continued and new publication activities.

American archivists, evidently, are especially anxious to learn to what extend English archival depositories have been destroyed or damaged as the result of war-time air raids. The authors of this report point out that, for many

reasons, it is impossible to report fully upon this subject. Reference is made, however, to the evacuation of more than seven hundred tons of records from the Public Record Office, which body would seem not to have suffered particular harm. Likewise the keeper of manuscripts of the British Museum reports that its records have not suffered as a result of air raids. Other agencies such as the Institute of Historical Research, the Northern Ireland Public Record Office, the Scotland Register House, and the National Library of Wales report little or no damage to their holdings. The chief instance cited on the negative side is that of the old company records relating to the colony of Southern Rhodesia, housed in London, which were completely destroyed. Regarding this event the authors of the report state: "We have read with great, if painful, interest the official report of a Parliamentary debate on this occasion, in which all speakers recognized and deplored the gravity of the catastrophe."

In addition to the agencies above mentioned the report discusses the activities of the Historical Manuscripts Commission; public and private local record offices, libraries and museums; the Imperial Record Department of India, and, in the United States, the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Harvard College Archives, the Clements Library of the University of Michigan and the Yale University Library. In the section relating to the National Archives tribute is paid to Dr. R. D. W. Connor, first archivist of the United States, retired, and a cordial welcome is extended to Dr. Solon J. Buck, Dr. Connor's successor, "who has made himself known to European Archivists in more than one visit." Finally a brief note refers to the activities of the Society of American Archivists and to the publication THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST and states: "We heartily wish that members of our profession in the United States may gather what small profit is possible from the War, as we have done, in the shape of added experience and knowledge; and that, unlike us, they may not have to pay a heavy price for it."

Dorsey W. Hyde, Jr.

The National Archives

SHORTER NOTICES

EDWARD F. ROWSE, Editor
The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

"Salvaging Canada's Past," by Elsie McLeod Murray. Reprinted from the *Ontario Library Review*, XXVI (1942), 286-296. This is a thought-provoking article which can well be read with profit by all archivists and custodians of historical manuscripts. Miss Murray, by training both a historian and a librarian, is the curator of manuscripts in the Lawson Memorial Library and speaks from experience.

The article begins by stressing the individuality of manuscript collections, and the impossibility of imposing on them either the principles of library science or the procedures followed with other collections, a caution worth observing in this decade of multiplication of new archivists, because of the influence of libraries in our lives and the tendency to follow in others' footsteps. The discussion on the necessity of compromising between what is desirable and the means at one's disposal is refreshing and practical, offering helpful suggestions for greatest achievement. The cautions on handling, disarranging, and damaging should be fundamental to all archivists. Having given her cautions, Miss Murray then discusses accessioning, arrangement, and finding media, epitomizing in these paragraphs the experience of many repositories. Inasmuch as procedure must vary in different institutions and with different collections, Miss Murray carefully refrains from prescribing, merely offering the various practices for consideration. In this discussion, however, one point emerges with welcome clarity—the necessity for the custodian to know his collection in minute detail, studying the period and the institutions with which it is concerned, for it is only through his knowledge as set forth in a catalogue, calendar, guide, or even verbal consultation that the collection can be made available to the reader.

All in all, Miss Murray has rendered a service to the profession, not only by her suggestions, but also by her cautions, enabling new custodians to avoid regrettable errors.—EDNA VOSPER

Current National Bibliographies: A List of Sources of Information Concerning Current Books of All Countries, compiled by Lawrence Heyl (Chicago. American Library Association, 1942. 19 pp. mimeographed. $.75). This is a revised edition of a preliminary list which appeared in 1933. It contains a number of new titles and omits others which are no longer appearing or for which better ones have been substituted. When there is doubt as to whether a particular title is appearing, it is included. The titles listed are largely publishers' lists, which are more promptly available than annual bibliographies such as *Writings in American History* and the *Handbook of*

Latin American Studies, which are excluded. The entries show the title, the interval at which it appears, the publisher, and the place of publication. The beginning date of the publication is omitted. Descriptive comment is added to many titles. The arrangement of the titles is alphabetical by name of country. This list is primarily intended for and will be most useful to librarians.—HENRY P. BEERS

Records of the Columbia Historical Society of Washington, D.C., 1940-1941, Vol. 42-43, edited by Newman F. McGirr (816 14th St. N.W., Washington. 1942. Pp. viii, 309. $3.50). This is the first review of the *Records* which has appeared in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST. Were one to interpret the word "records" in the title of this volume strictly in the archival sense, this might appear a grave oversight. The *Records,* however, simply include papers (for the most part those read before meetings of the society) and an appendix containing information of the type more or less generally found in the publications of the more "successful" local historical societies. From its organization in 1894, the Columbia Historical Society has preferred to expend its available energy and resources on an annual or biennial volume, rather than on the more usual quarterly journal.

The current compilation is the first edited by the new secretary and curator, Newman F. McGirr of the library staff of the National Archives. His predecessor, Maud Burr Morris, retired from office at the end of the calendar year 1940 after twenty-four consecutive years of service. Such devotion to labors of love is not uncommon in this society, however; its president, Allen C. Clark, is now in his twenty-sixth year in that office. Of twelve papers included in the present volume, five are by President Clark. The following quotation, which appears at the beginning of the last of these articles, adequately describes his unique position: "[President Allen C. Clark's papers are based upon his personal research in source material relating to the District of Columbia history, in which field he is a master. No editorial changes have been made in them.—Ed.]"

An indication of the variety and scope of the papers may be gained from a list of the titles: "Captain James Barry," by Allen C. Clark; "Hawaii, an Address," by Samuel Wilder King; "The Activities of Peter Force," by Newman F. McGirr; "Suter's Tavern," by Allen C. Clark; "Down Through the Years Stories," by Randolph Blinn; "Zalmon Richards, Educator," by Allen C. Clark; "April, a Battle Month in History," by Fred A. Emery; "The Mystery of Ninian Beall's Burial Place Remains Unsolved," by George Magruder Battey; "Material in The National Archives Relating to the Early History of the District of Columbia," by Elizabeth Bethel (of the National Archives staff); "Commodore James Barron; Commodore Stephen Decatur; the Barron-Decatur Duel," by Allen C. Clark; "Virginia's Glebe Near Washington," by Charles O. Paullin; "George Gordon of the

Two Original Proprietors of George Town, D.C.," by Allen C. Clark.

As may be expected, most of the contributions have an antiquarian flavor, with somewhat more than a dash of reminiscences added for those who prefer the "down through the years" treatment. This is not to imply, of course, that articles such as these are without interest and value, but within the volume itself there is considerable contrast between papers which are well documented and those which leave the reader to conjecture as to the possible source of information. The *Records* are strong on biographical sketches, and throughout the set are to be found numerous portraits of historically important personages and members of their families. This volume contains thirteen excellent plates, including facsimiles of documents and sketches of historic houses and other structures as well as portraits.

Any student interested in the history of the nation's capital will find the *Records* indispensable. The value of these volumes as sources of information about outstanding public figures of the country is, I believe, not adequately recognized.—Sherrod E. East

NEWS NOTES

KARL L. TREVER, Editor
The National Archives, Washington, D.C.

THE SOCIETY OF AMERICAN ARCHIVISTS

Report of the Secretary
October 26, 1942

One member of the Society recently gave as a reason for not attending this meeting "Too much war!" Unfortunately we have no choice as to how much war we are going to have. We only know that we're going to have plenty. So many efforts are being made to "war-ize" various activities, that the subject is almost trite. But it is still unavoidable, and this report must reflect the general preoccupation.

Whereas increased costs and decreased revenues were foreseen in the secretary's report a year ago as one of the probable effects of war on this Society, these factors have so far not proved as serious as we feared. The warning may well be repeated in view of current economic developments, however, and our attention at this meeting should be directed to a careful selection of activities meriting continuation or inauguration in war time.

As a matter of fact, a more serious difficulty than financial restrictions has been the pressure of emergency activities on the time and mental energy of the Society's officers, committee chairmen, and other members. From this factor there is no prospect of relief. It therefore behooves us to plan a program clearly defined and sufficiently promising of results to merit the attention of the overworked members who are given the responsibility for its execution.

The Society has remained solvent by the simple rule of maintaining its revenues and keeping within its budget. Revenues are derived from membership dues, subscription fees, sale of back copies of THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST, and the subvention of the University of Illinois for editorial expenses of that journal. The last item is constant in amount. Sale of back copies has dropped somewhat. The numbers of members and subscribers has remained even despite expectations of a year ago, thanks to the work of Martin P. Claussen as chairman of the membership committee. Whereas in October, 1941, there were 247 individual and 34 institutional members and 51 subscribers, this year's count shows 248 individual and 34 institutional members, and 61 subscribers. Geographical distribution has been reduced, so far as foreign members and subscribers are concerned, by the war. Geographical distribution may be somewhat broadened by overseas duty of the about 17 members who have joined the armed services.

Two actions of the council in the past year have been designed to retain the memberships of foreign members and those in the armed services who

are prevented by war circumstances from paying dues. These actions authorized the secretary to retain such members on the rolls if they agreed to pay the dues for the intervening period after the war. What little experience we have had so far has shown that we cannot even communicate with the foreign members who would be affected by this policy, and that most of the soldiers and sailors either are willing to continue payments or cannot be reached. Probably the only practical procedure will be to make sure that sufficient extra copies of the journal are held to provide complete files if these members can be recovered after the war.

An innovation in the field of membership was the election of an honorary member at the last annual meeting. The diploma representing this action was transmitted by Dr. Connor to the President of the United States last winter. The President replied in a letter which has been published in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST. He mentioned his interest in Dutchess County and naval records and in microfilming for security, and stated that the Society could count on his "continued support in the fine work which it is doing."

The loss of three members or former members by death must be noted with great regret. George H. Ryden, archivist of Delaware and professor of history at the University of Delaware, died on October 12, 1941. He was a founding member of the Society and served as chairman of its auditing committee for four years. Fred L. Mahannah, who also died October 12, 1941, was assistant curator of the Iowa Department of History and Archives, and contributed much to the development of archival legislation and to the procurement of storage space for state records in a suitable building.

Alexander C. Flick, who died on July 30, 1942, had retired in 1939 as director of the Department of Archives and History of the New York State Department of Education, a position he had held since 1923. He contributed substantially to care of public records throughout the state and to collection of materials for the history of the state.

The most important single activity of the Society is the publication of THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST. Its merit increases, thanks to the editorial guidance of Professor Pease and his staff, the work of Karl L. Trever on news notes, and the handling of book reviews by Emmett J. Leahy. Mr. Leahy has recently called upon Edward F. Rowse to serve for him temporarily. The gradual increase of members and subscribers is largely dependent upon the journal, and substantial interest has always been shown in it.

Professor Pease agrees with me, however, that some stimulus to the production of articles from which he can choose is necessary in order to maintain the standards he wishes to have characterize our journal. The problem is not only one of volume and quality. It is also one of distribution of subjects among the widely varied topics of interest to the members. Therefore, at the suggestion

of Miss Margaret C. Norton, a proposal will be submitted at this meeting, to authorize the president to appoint a committee on archival research.

There have been no other publications in the past year. Demand for the reprints of the "Proposed Uniform State Public Records Act," issued in 1940, has resulted in complete exhaustion of the stock, although the April, 1940, issue of THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST, which contained that draft, is still available for sale. There are a number of copies of *The Preservation of Local Archives*, published by the Public Archives Commission in 1932 and reprinted by this Society in 1940.

Three joint sessions with other organizations have been held in the past year. One was the regular joint luncheon with the American Historical Association, which carries on the tradition dating back to 1909. At the luncheon in Chicago on December 30, 1941, Herbert A. Kellar and Solon J. Buck discussed the collection of materials for study of the current war activities.

An important innovation was the first joint session of this Society and the American Political Science Association during the latter's annual meeting in New York City on December 31, 1941. Helen L. Chatfield, Wayne C. Grover, and Luther H. Evans spoke on the role of the archivist in public administration and the values of archives as materials for research in political science. Attendance was not encouraging, largely because of competing concurrent sessions with speakers of popular fame.

Another important innovation was the joint session with the American Association for State and Local History, a successful venture which is being repeated this year.

Washington members of the Society gathered five times in Federal Records Conferences, a series of meetings sponsored by the Society which have done much to promote an understanding of good records administration among federal agencies. In addition to the co-operation with other organizations that has been mentioned, the president of the Society reappointed Vernon D. Tate as its representative in the American Documentation Institute. A proposal for a joint session with the Southern Historical Association was rendered fruitless by the cancellation of the annual meeting of that organization.

Aside from publications and meetings, the constructive work of the Society is intended to be carried on by committees. Several of these groups have served the Society well, but all too often the work has been done by the chairman without assistance or concurrence from other members. This phase of our work has suffered the most seriously from the general preoccupation with war-related or war-affected activities. This has been true of committee chairmen and I regret to say of the secretary, with the result that some of our committees have not even been organized this year. In general I believe that there have been too many committees in past years. Some have been allowed to lapse for inactivity, but the major lack has been for programs

rather than for zeal. I think the Society would do well in the future to appoint committees only when specific tasks are to be done or specific problems to be solved. General considerations of large phases of archival economy could probably better be left to the proposed committee on research, with the hope that it might persuade individuals to undertake reviews of needs in specific fields and to produce substantial written contributions.

With all due respects to the persons who have in the past been assigned to these committees, and in some cases with their concurrence, I believe that there are either not sufficiently definite programs or not enough urgency to justify the continuance of several groups during the war. The committees on publication policies, maps, business archives, municipal archives, and terminology have at times in the history of the Society performed useful functions as a result of the faithful efforts of chairmen and members. A report summarizing information obtained by the group studying publication policies is still anticipated. Unless some definite plan for activity that will merit the time of committee members in war time is presented, however, I would suggest that they be allowed to lapse for the duration.

The Committee on Protection of Archives Against the Hazards of War has, through Miss Margaret C. Norton, circularized state agencies with respect to the protective measures they have taken, and there has been wide use of the report prepared by it and another group a year ago on the *Care of Records in a National Emergency*. That report was first published by the National Archives, and later by the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources of the National Resources Planning Board. The chairman of the Society's committee on protection, Lt. Collas G. Harris, has suggested that the committee be dropped inasmuch as its objectives are being effectively carried out by the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources. Lester J. Cappon has been appointed to the latter group as the official representative of the Society.

The chairman of the Society's Committee on History and Organization of Government Emergency Agencies has recommended that that group be discontinued because the study of first World War agencies which it planned and recommended to the National Archives is being carried forward by that institution.

Three of our committees appear to me to have a special opportunity for accomplishment during the war, and should be continued, working in close co-operation. The widespread activities of collection of war history materials, coupled with increasing recognition of the importance of organized official archives of government and private organizations, will surely provide a definite incentive to the construction of facilities for the care of these records in the post-war reconstruction period. The Society should in my opinion recognize the opportunity to guide the popular support for such construction into support for the development of archival agencies. State archives offer

the most likely field for accomplishment in this regard, and might well be the focus of our attention. This is in fact consistent with recommendations contained in an important document entitled "Memorandum on a Permanent Program for the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources," dated September 11, 1942, written by the executive secretary of that body, Dan Lacy. It is my understanding that the CCCR conceives its function as that of encouraging movements toward objectives, lending concrete assistance when feasible, but leaving detailed program planning and operation to specialized professional organizations such as the Society of American Archivists.

Mr. Lacy and I have discussed the possibility of a post-war planning committee for the Society, but it appears to me that a more substantial tone of permanence and continuing objectives would be achieved by depending upon our existing committees on public relations, collection and preservation of war history materials, and uniform state legislation. The public relations committee might serve as a clearing house of information on activities in the numerous states where movements for state archives are now underway, promoting exchange of information on methods of organizing and gaining public support for such undertakings, and co-ordinating all the Society's work in post-war planning.

The Committee on Collection of War History Materials, under the chairmanship of Herbert A. Kellar, has already collected a good deal of material, partly by the employment of a part time research assistant and partly through the co-operation of the McCormick Historical Association. Mr. Kellar has emphasized the idea that human beings express their common emotions and aspirations through organizations, and that it is therefore essential to preserve the organized bodies of records of all sorts of war organizations or information about them. A more important function of that committee, however, is to encourage collection of war history materials by state and local authorities. Plans have already been laid for this committee to serve as a co-ordinating body for the representatives of the Society on state subcommittees of the CCCR devoted to collection activities. The records collected would constitute the materials for the institutions and buildings that would be promoted in a post-war planning program.

The Committee on Uniform State Legislation has already had several calls for information as to the form of a law to establish a state archival agency where none exists, and A. R. Newsome, chairman of that group, is working on a draft for a suggested model law. Such a document would definitely be useful in post-war planning. The proposed uniform public records act drawn up in 1940 presupposed the existence of an archival agency. Consultation with the secretary of the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws, for which body that act was prepared, indicates that the conference is not likely to consider recommending uniform state archival

legislation until after the war, if then. It is doubtful in fact that archival legislation can be made sufficiently uniform, word for word, to fit the program of that conference.

Four other groups have submitted reports indicating that their activities are well worth continuing. The Committee on International Relations arranged a session on Latin American archival guides at the last annual meeting, and obtained approval of its recommendation by the council of this Society and by the Inter-American Bibliographical and Library Association. That recommendation was to the effect that proper authorities should be urged to provide means for preparation of a guide to materials for the study of United States history in Latin-American archives and of Latin-American history to be found in archives of the United States. The committee, through its chairman, Samuel F. Bemis, now recommends that our council repeat this resolution to be directed specifically toward a new joint committee of the American Council of Learned Societies and two other organizations dealing with Latin-American studies. It also recommends the election of distinguished foreign archivists to honorary membership in the Society when this seems appropriate.

The collection of data for an objective study of archival filing equipment by Mrs. Virginia Leddy Gambrell, who constitutes a special Committee on Filing Equipment, will be represented by her discussion in the session on technical problems of archivists at this annual meeting.

The training of archivists is such a serious problem in view of personnel shortages caused by the war that any accomplishment in this line should by all means be encouraged. Ernst Posner, as chairman of a committee dealing with this subject, has gathered a variety of recommendations on training programs from his committee members. More concretely, he has participated actively in the development of an archival curriculum at the American University in Washington, and in the conduct of an orientation training program at the National Archives. By his research and writing he has contributed substantially to the literature on or useful in training.

Attention of the Committee on Records Administration has been largely concerned with federal records problems. A report of the committee prepared in 1941 was referred to the Bureau of the Budget by vote of the council of the Society. Subsequent discussions led to the suggestion by the chairman of the committee, Emmett J. Leahy, that the Budget Bureau act to require appointment of records officers in all federal agencies. Although such action was not forthcoming, hearings conducted on the subject contributed substantially to the recognition of need for care of records by federal administrative officials. The two committee members had opportunities individually to write public statements, Miss Helen Chatfield in her paper on "The Role of the Archivist in Public Administration," presented at the American Political Science Association meeting, and Mr. Leahy in his article on

"Records Administration and the War," in the summer issue of *Military Affairs*. Both papers were subsequently issued or reissued by the National Archives.

This report closes on a pleasant note in an expression of appreciation to the other officers and council members, the editor and his associates, the committee chairmen, and the numerous other members of the Society who have co-operated with the secretary so willingly and effectively. A dependable and effective servant of the Society who should receive public recognition is Miss Mary A. Givens, assistant to the treasurer, who has for six years co-operated with the secretary in handling the Society's receipts and expenditures. All this smooth working toward the common objective of promoting archival economy is surely evidence that the Society has a substantial field of potential accomplishment and is making real progress toward it.

Respectfully submitted,

PHILIP C. BROOKS, *Secretary*

Minutes of the Business Meeting, October 26, 1942

The Society convened in its annual business meeting in the Virginia Room of the John Marshall Hotel, Richmond, Virginia, at 9:00 P.M., October 26, 1942, approximately sixty members attending.

The minutes of the previous business meeting were approved. The reports of the secretary, treasurer, and auditing committee were read and approved.

Upon the recommendation of the Committee on International Relations, transmitted by the secretary, it was

> Resolved, that the secretary be instructed to call to the attention of the Joint Committee on Latin American Studies of the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council, and the National Research Council the need for guides to materials for the study of United States history in Latin-American archives, and for the study of Latin-American history in archives and manuscript collections of the United States, and that that committee be urged to provide for the preparation of such guides.
>
> Voted, that the council be requested to authorize the appointment of a committee on archival research, as suggested in the report of the secretary.

An invitation from Albany to hold the seventh annual meeting of the Society in that city was read. Invitations were also on hand from Princeton, Raleigh, Charlottesville, Springfield, Illinois, and Washington, D.C.

> Voted, to approve the report of the resolutions committee, read by its chairman, Curtis W. Garrison, as follows:
>
> 1. Whereas the Society of American Archivists is enjoying and will

continue to enjoy, undampened by the most unusual weather, the hospitality of the commonwealth of Virginia, our host, the Virginia State Library, the city of Richmond, and the John Marshall Hotel, extended through various officials and their staffs, *be it resolved* that the Society hereby extend its hearty thanks for this pleasant visit, and the secretary convey our thanks to the appropriate officials.

2. Whereas the Program Committee and the Committee on Local Arrangements have worked tirelessly to make this sixth meeting of the Society of American Archivists so successful in spite of handicaps and difficulties due to the war emergency and have indeed shown ingenuity and resourcefulness in fitting the meeting into these times, *be it resolved* that the members hereby express their great satisfaction to Mr. Burt and Mr. Van Schreeven and all the members of their committees.

3. Whereas the Historical Records Survey, lately closed because of the war, has added approximately two thousand inventories, guides, and other publications to the unprecedented enrichment of archival and historical information and activity, *be it resolved* that the Society of American Archivists expresses its appreciation to the officials and the many workers for this great accomplishment, and hopes that in the future this survey will be resumed in some form under the auspices of the United States government.

4. Whereas the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources through its national and state committees has planned and is now executing a war-time records conservation program of the greatest value to American history and archival economy, therefore, *be it resolved* that the Society highly commends this far-sighted undertaking, sincerely hopes that it will be continued, and extends its thanks to the officials in charge.

5. Whereas the University of Illinois has continued the subvention of $500 per year for the editing and publishing of THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST, *be it resolved* that the Society hereby expresses its sincere appreciation for this generous testimony to the value of its official publication, and hereby directs the secretary to convey its appreciation by letter to the president of the university.

The report of the nominating committee was read by its chairman, Margaret C. Norton, and it was

Voted, that a unanimous ballot be cast in favor of the nominees, as follows: for president, R. D. W. Connor; for vice-president, Harold S. Burt; for secretary, Lester J. Cappon; for treasurer, Julian P. Boyd; for council member for a term of five years ending in 1947, Philip C. Brooks. The ballot was cast by the outgoing council member, Miss Norton.

The remaining council members continue to hold office for the following periods: Sargent B. Child, one year ending in 1943; William D. McCain, two years ending in 1944; Morris L. Radoff, three years ending in 1945; Herbert A. Kellar, four years ending in 1946.

Voted, to approve the following resolution, offered by Herbert A. Kellar:

Whereas Dr. Philip C. Brooks, founding member of the Society of American Archivists, elected secretary at its organizational meeting in Providence, Rhode Island, December, 1936, has served assiduously and efficiently during the entire existence of the Society, therefore, *be it resolved* that its members hereby express their deep appreciation for his capable and untiring services which have been an important factor in the growth and development of the Society.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 P.M.

PHILIP C. BROOKS, *Secretary*

Minutes of the Council, October 26, 1942

The council met at the John Marshall Hotel, Richmond, Virginia, at 4:45 P.M., October 26, 1942, the president, vice-president, secretary, and Margaret C. Norton, Sargent B. Child, Herbert A. Kellar, William D. McCain, and Morris L. Radoff attending.

The following qualified applicants were elected to membership in the Society: Robert H. Bahmer, Adeline V. Barry, T. D. Seymour Bassett, Charles Kenneth Blood, Kathleen Bruce, James E. Downes, Reverend John Tracy Ellis, Mrs. Kathleen O'Brien Fisher, Mrs. Elizabeth E. Hamer, Mrs. Philip W. Hiden, Lillian R. Kessler, Dan Lacy, Clifford Lord, Nona-Murray Lucke, George C. Reeves, Roger Thomas, Nannie May Tilley, and Society of Colonial Dames of America (institutional).

Victor Hugo Paltsits, former chairman of the Public Archives Commission, keeper of manuscripts at the New York Public Library, and council member of the Society, was elected to honorary membership.

The outgoing secretary was authorized to give to the library of the National Archives such publications of other organizations and institutions as had accumulated in his office.

Action on several other matters which were discussed was deferred until the business meeting or the first meeting of the new council.

The council adjourned at 6 o'clock.

PHILIP C. BROOKS, *Secretary*

Minutes of the Council, October 27, 1942

The council met at the John Marshall Hotel, Richmond, Virginia, at

8:30 A.M., October 27, 1942, the president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, Philip C. Brooks, Sargent B. Child, Herbert A. Kellar, William D. McCain, and Morris L. Radoff attending.

Voted, to appoint Karl L. Trever as a member of the Editorial Board for a term of four years ending in 1946.

The following qualified applicants were elected to membership in the Society:

Whitney R. Cross, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York
Rev. Thomas H. Spence, Jr., Historical Foundation of the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, Montreat, North Carolina

Voted, that the president and secretary, as they see fit, arrange for joint sessions of the Society of American Archivists with other organizations.

Voted, to accept provisionally (because of war conditions) the invitation of Princeton University Library to meet in 1943 at Princeton, New Jersey, the decision as to the actual holding of the meeting and the date to be determined later.

The council discussed possible ways and means of publicizing the proposal for the microfilming of federal, state, and local archives of all kinds, as stated by the President of the United States in his letter of February 13, 1942, to R. D. W. Connor. Voted, that President Connor be authorized to appoint a one-man committee to make effective said proposal.

The council then discussed the advantages of having a committee on archival research, to survey the possibilities of articles on various aspects of the archival and manuscript fields for publication in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST. A series of articles, *e.g.* descriptions of state and local archives, annual accessions of archival and manuscript agencies, etc., was suggested. Voted, to authorize the president to appoint a Committee on Archival Research.

The council adjourned at 10:30 A.M.

LESTER J. CAPPON, *Secretary*

Report of the Auditing Committee

Your Auditing Committee finds the report of the treasurer to be correct in every detail. It is a concise but well prepared statement of the financial conditions of the Society of American Archivists. A certified statement of the bank balance and the amount of money transmitted by the secretary to the treasurer was used to verify these facts.

Respectfully submitted,
DAVID L. DARDEN
GILBERT KNIPMEYER

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

December 31, 1940, to December 31, 1941

Balance on hand, December 31, 1940		$1,523.82
Income:		
New memberships	$ 170.00	
Returned membership check redeemed	5.00	
Renewals of membership	1,260.00	
THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST:		
Subscriptions	247.50	
Sale of back issues	113.92	
Sale of *Proceedings*	6.25	
Registration fees, fifth annual meeting	85.00	
Income for the calendar year, 1941	$1,887.67	
Less returned checks and bank charges	10.25	
Net income		$1,877.42
Total to be accounted for		$3,401.24
Expenditures:		
Secretary's office	$ 302.84	
Treasurer's office	85.00	
Publication fund	1,201.60	
Committee on Nominations	6.95	
Committee on Membership	43.48	
Committee on Preservation of Records	100.00	
Committee on Business Archives	30.38	
Repurchased journal issues	6.00	
Annual meeting	121.40	
Total expenditures		$1,898.15
Balance per books, December 31, 1941		$1,503.09
Add outstanding checks No. 220	$ 100.00	
221	1.50	
222	.50	
223	5.25	
224	2.18	
Total outstanding checks		$ 109.43
Balance per Tradesmen's National Bank, December 31, 1941		$1,612.52

Washington members of the Society met in a Federal Records Conference on October 22, 1942. Percy Hayward, British administrative officer, Office of the Combined Chiefs of Staff, presented a paper on "One British Viewpoint on Records Administration." Solon J. Buck, archivist of the United States, presided.

The National Archives

The National Archives has continued to receive large groups of records that constitute major portions of the noncurrent central records of a number of important federal agencies. Among those in this category are records of the Agricultural Marketing Administration and its predecessors, 1871-1941; the Insolvent National Banks Division of the Bureau of the Comptroller of the Currency, 1890-1940; the Secret Service Division, 1891-1937; the Narcotics Bureau, 1916-1939; the National Youth Administration, 1935-1941; and the Soil Conservation Service, 1936-1940. Similar groups transferred by the War Department consist of records of the Quartermaster General's Office, 1800-1894; the Adjutant General's Office, 1888-1936, including records of the office of the Chief of Staff, 1903-1921, and of some subdivisions of the War Department General Staff, 1917-1925; the National Guard Bureau and predecessor and related offices, 1903-1939, including papers relating to state and territorial military organizations, 1825-1903; and the Surgeon General's Office, completing the central records of this office in the National Archives through 1927.

Many field service records have also been accessioned lately. Outstanding among these are substantially all the noncurrent records, 1788-1941, of 398 American diplomatic and consular posts located all over the world. Of somewhat the same type are records of the Foreign Agricultural Relations Office, consisting of reports of consular officials, agricultural trade commissioners, and special agents, 1904-1938. Records have also been received from several field offices of the Soil Conservation Service.

Of note among other accessions are certain records of the White House office, 1814-1941, including some original executive orders, proclamations, and departmental regulations, 1869-1913, fair copies of letters sent by President Hayes and his secretary, 1877-1881, and some registers of nominations, appointments, criminal pardons, and court-martial cases, 1857-1913; Interior Department records relating to the Antarctic Expedition of 1939-1941; and records of the World's Fair Commission, 1937-1941.

Illustrating the application of the technique of microfilming in the reduction in bulk of large bodies of records of recent date are the microfilm copies of the general correspondence of the Washington, D.C., office of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, 1933-1936, which the National Archives has just received. The photographs of the records on 482 rolls of microfilm

occupy only eight cubic feet whereas the records themselves, which have been destroyed, formerly filled scores of filing cases.

A number of additions to the file microcopies of the National Archives have been made in the last few months. Among these are reproductions of outgoing letters of the office of the Secretary of War relating to Indian Affairs, 1800-1824 (6 vols.), the records of the Russian-American Company, 1802-1867 (93 vols.), and the territorial papers of the State Department relating to Utah, 1853-1873 (2 vols.), Washington, 1854-1872 (2 vols.), and Nevada, 1861-1864 (1 vol.). Positive prints of these reproductions are available at cost to anyone interested.

In response to administrative needs of certain war agencies, a special list of material in the National Archives entitled *Records of the Bureau of Insular Affairs Relating to the Philippine Islands, 1898-1935; A List of Selected Files* (xii, 91 pp.) has been issued. This list, compiled by Kenneth Munden, is designed to serve as a guide to the contents of the main administrative and informational files of the bureau in so far as they relate to the Philippines.

The archivist of the United States has announced the appointment to the staff of the National Archives of Jessie E. Boell, formerly state supervisor of the Wisconsin Survey of Federal Archives and Historical Records Survey and more recently of the Office of Price Administration; Forrest L. Foor, formerly of the history and economics faculty of Williams Junior College (California); Guy A. Lee, of the history faculty of Clark University; and James R. Masterson, of the English faculty of Hillsdale College (Michigan). Other personnel changes include the resignation of Ralph G. Lounsbury and the transfer of Everett Owen Alldredge and Edwin Page Bledsoe for war work in other agencies. Among members of the staff who have recently entered the armed services are Paul L. Bishop, Collas G. Harris, Arthur E. Kimberly, Frank D. McAlister, Thornton W. Mitchell, and John F. Simmons.

Fifty posters of first World War days and 65 federal government posters of the current war series were placed on public display at the National Archives building on October 12.

The 50 posters on first World War days include 14 German posters used by German commanders during the occupation of Belgium and 36 American posters emphasizing food conservation, recruitment for the armed forces, and liberty bonds. Also included are one poster requesting that binoculars be sent to the "Navy Department, c/o Hon. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Naval Observatory," a Red Cross poster bearing the picture and facsimile signature of President Woodrow Wilson, and a Belgian food appeal with a picture of Cardinal Mercier.

Current war posters include new and revised James Montgomery Flagg portraits, a series of OEM posters designed to stimulate industrial production, Army and Navy recruiting themes, and a collection of nine "tough guy"

physical fitness posters produced by the U. S. Public Health Service. The current collection includes also eleven posters admonishing the public to keep quiet regarding military information and a series of seven posters depicting soldiers and sailors of other United Nations as our particular friends.

Also placed on display on October 12 is an exhibition of about one hundred documents that touch upon the history of Latin-American countries. These documents have been produced or collected by the United States government in the course of its regular business and have been selected because of their basic significance, because of their human appeal, or because of their representative nature.

Shown are treaties resulting from the first Pan American Conference, letters from Lorado Taft, the sculptor of the Columbus Memorial in Union Station Plaza, letters from Walter Reed concerning his discovery of the mosquito transmission of yellow fever, letters from Central America at the time those provinces formed a united republic, 1824-1839, records of attempts to link the Americas by rail and by air, a diplomatic despatch of February 6, 1918, from the American ambassador at Rio de Janeiro in which a policy of naval co-operation during the first World War is suggested, letters from Simón Bolívar and San Martín, and a letter from Benito Juárez, Mexico's hero, to Abraham Lincoln accrediting an envoy to this country, the logbook of the S.S. "City of Pittsburgh" while Matthew Fontaine Maury was making a scientific expedition around South America in 1852. The book is opened to the narrative of the day of September 10, 1852, when Emperor Dom Pedro came aboard. Maury, by his scientific observation of ocean winds and currents, was able to cut ten to fifteen days from the travel time between New York and Rio de Janeiro.

Documents of Brazil symbolic of a period of military collaboration long before our present one include a letter from John Bassett Moore informing the Secretary of War that a formal invitation has been extended to the Brazilian government to send army officers to a U. S. Coast Artillery school. Then, as today, the United States and Brazil co-operated for their own security and the security of the Americas. Reports on Chilean nitrate and on Bolivian rubber production have particularly striking significance for Americans today who face the pressing problem of winning a war despite shortages of these and other strategic materials.

There are in the National Archives tens of thousands of records that tell of Latin America but which, although when taken in large groups tell a story of great moment and color, lose significance and seem routine in nature when removed from the body of materials of which they are a part. It must be remembered that these documents were produced by the United States government in the course of its regular business and therefore cannot tell the history of a country—each can but touch upon phases of it. Each of the twenty Latin American republics is represented in at least one case and frequently in others.

Franklin D. Roosevelt Library

Papers recently transferred to the library by the President include White House files of correspondence, memoranda, reports, and other materials relating to the operation of the executive departments and agencies for the period 1933-1940. The papers cover virtually every phase of their activities, including the appointment of officials, the planning and organization of functions, the allocation of appropriations, the determination of policy, and the conduct of relations with other agencies, with Congress, and with the public. Other official papers received include correspondence of government officials and private persons with the White House on matters of policy and law affecting private enterprises such as the railroads and utilities, and letters from veteran and youth organizations urging legislation in their interest. The President has also given the library a file of correspondence and other papers relating to his career as New York state senator for the period 1911-1913. This material includes correspondence on the preparation and enactment of legislation, letters to and from constituents in connection with Mr. Roosevelt's stand on various issues, and letters concerning the national political situation in 1912.

Jeremiah Milbank, formerly acting chairman of the President's Birthday Ball Commission for Infantile Paralysis Research, has given the library a selected group of reports and letters from the working files of the commission covering its activities from 1934, when it was organized, to 1937, when its work was taken over by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis.

Director Fred W. Shipman has been appointed a representative of the Committee on Records of War Administration and in the future will divide his time between Hyde Park and Washington. He will work in the White House and will ascertain what records concerning the war effort are being maintained there and what additional records should be sought to complete the story.

Assistant Director Edgar B. Nixon has been appointed field representative of the National Archives in New York state (exclusive of New York City) and New England. In addition to handling specific disposal and transfer tasks, he will promote the general objectives of the National Archives records administration program. These duties will be in addition to his regular work in the library.

The library is actively participating in the program of the Mid-Hudson Committee on the Conservation of Cultural Resources, of which Mr. Shipman is chairman. An important phase of the committee's program is the collection of source materials of other than state or federal origin having to do with the Mid-Hudson Valley's participation in the war effort. Individuals and organizations engaged in war activity are being approached in an attempt to interest them in preserving the war records of this region.

Library of Congress

Among recent accessions to the Division of Manuscripts the following may be of particular interest to archivists: Papers of or relating to, or collected by Colonel John Bigelow pertaining to the Suez and Panama canals, explorations and discoveries, military and diplomatic history, military strategy, and American foreign policy; 56 pages of typewritten copies and 1,218 photocopies of manuscripts in Spanish and Mexican archives and libraries, dated 1515-1795; 77 boxes of papers of William James Ghent relating to history of western United States, dated 1761-1942; three military reports of Captain Silas Burbank (18th Continental Infantry and 12th Massachusetts Regiment, dated June 30, 1777-August, 1778; ten papers (letters and documents [accounts]) of Dubey and Company, and Dutilh and Company, Philadelphia, pertaining in part to shipment of ammunition and supplies to Fort Pitt, dated February 16-August, 1785; seven papers of Dutilh and Wasmuth, Philadelphia firm, pertaining to the shipment of slaves from the Gold Coast and Angola, Africa, and payment for slaves, San Domingo and Haiti, dated 1788-1797; grant of land from the United States to Robert Ormsby, from lands directed to be sold at Shawneetown, Illinois, dated and signed at Washington, D.C., by John Quincy Adams, President, and George Graham, commissioner of the General Land Office, November 20, 1826; journal (one volume) of Lewis Brantz (master, merchant marine) kept on a trip from Baltimore to Mexico, with notes and sketches, dated October 18, 1829-March, 1834; ten letters from Tappan Wentworth (member of Congress from New Hampshire) to John A. Burleigh, his law partner, pertaining to debates in Congress, dated February 1-March 8, 1833; 281 additional papers of William Maxwell Evarts, dated 1835-1908; 175 papers of Amasa Junius Parker (member of Congress from New York), dated 1836-1875; one volume of Barnum's Museum Daily Cash Book, dated May 5-July 2, 1851; 81 papers (including two volumes of household accounts and farm records) of L. S. Abbott (editor of the Painesville *Telegraph*), Painesville, Ohio (later in Falls Church, Virginia), dated 1854-1884; copies of six letters from S. E. Burrows to the Russian Count Nesselrode regarding the frigate "Diana" and facsimiles of two replies from Count Nesselrode to Burrows, dated March 15, 1855-November 14, 1856; two volumes of papers of William Tecumseh Sherman (part of material found in his published *Memoirs*), dated 1861-1865; three diaries, "Roll Book," and two loose papers of Lawrence Wilson (sergeant, Co. D, 7th Regiment, O. V. I., 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, 12th Army Corps), dated 1861-1865; letter book of letters sent, kept by, or for Eugene Schuyler, dated December 31, 1873—January 9, 1879 (including letters to Marshall Jewell, Hamilton Fish, Frederick W. Seward, London banking firms, and others); 32 letters of James Russell Lowell, to C. Hodson and others, dated 1884-1890; Volume 1 of the diary of Charles Sumner Hamlin (assistant secretary of the United States Treasury), with index, dated March 12, 1887-

September 1, 1910; 149 papers (mainly letters received) of and relating to Roscoe Conkling, dated 1769-1895; one box of papers of Dr. Emil Amberg relating to efforts of the American Medical Association and the Medical Association of Wayne County, Michigan, with respect to interstate reciprocity of licensing of physicians, dated 1899-1922; six papers of or relating to the North American Phonograph Company and persons connected with the history of the phonograph (Thomas Russell Lombard, Charles Sumner Taintor, W. E. Gilmore, J. Adrian Bush, Kenneth D. Lippincott), dated January 6, 1903-1929; two boxes (including two volumes) of papers concerning claims of the Lewis Gun Company *vs.* Great Britain (including petition of the American stockholders of the *Armes Automatiques Lewis*, a Belgian corporation, to the government of the United States), dated, or related to the dates, 1913-1931; "Papers of a Platoon Commander," 30th Division, A.E.F., on the British Front, 1918-1919 (papers of Henry Brown Dillard, lieutenant, 30th division, A.E.F., dated June, 1917-October 18, 1919, and 1931).

On October 20, 1942, it was announced in the press that the Manuscripts Division had acquired from Charles Kohen, proprietor of the Hobby Shop in Washington, some 9,000 items of "White House correspondence" relating to the administration of Calvin Coolidge. Mr. Kohen had acquired this collection following the death in 1935 of Edward T. Clark, private secretary to President Coolidge, 1923-1933. He had originally intended to sell the collection at auction, but after examination of its contents, he decided, in the public interest, to give the papers to the Library of Congress, where they will remain under seal for twenty years.

Grace Gardner Griffin has practically completed for publication a comprehensive descriptive guide to the collection of reproductions of manuscripts in British archives, libraries, and other depositories contained in the Division of Manuscripts. This guide will follow the general plan of the guides of original materials published in years past by the Carnegie Institution of Washington, and will be provided with a personal name and subject index. Concha de Zulueta of the Biblioteca Nacional de Bogota, who has received a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation, is cataloguing royal cedulas (manuscripts) found in the division. Manuscripts in the Herndon-Weik collection of Lincolniana relating to certain county courts have been microfilmed and positive copies may be obtained from the Photoduplication Service of the Library of Congress.

St. George L. Sioussat, chief of the division, addressed the Maryland Historical Society, November 9, on Maryland materials in the Manuscripts Division, while Thomas P. Martin, assistant chief, has in preparation an article on new developments in the control of manuscripts and manuscript collections. John Beverly Riggs is on leave of absence from the staff, his place being taken by Richmond Alvin Frailey.

Office of Records Administration, Navy Department

Archivists, historians, and those with related interests are concerned, and rightly so, as to the adequacy of current planning for the control and preservation of the documentation of the present war. An object lesson that illustrates well what can happen to important records when responsibility for their control is lacking or dissipated, is reported by the Office of Records Administration, Navy Department. Archivists of this office recently rescued from a mass of routine and badly disorganized financial records of the 1920's, a letter file kept on board the flagship "New York" under the command of Admiral W. T. Sampson during the summer of 1898. This file was buried in one of several large collections which had for years been stored in a general purpose warehouse where responsible records custodianship was impossible. The removal of the records last March to a naval records depository in charge of a competent archivist led to the discovery of the Sampson letter file.

The papers in the file, several hundred in number, are dated largely during the months of June, July, and August, 1898, the months, it will be recalled, when the Spanish fleet under Cervera was destroyed and Santiago de Cuba taken. They consist of reports received from and copies of despatches to certain of the vessels attached to Admiral Sampson's squadron. These are supplemented by copies of reports made by the commanding officer of the first battalion, U. S. Marine Corps, and by a file of correspondence between Sampson and Generals Miles and Shafter. Perhaps the most interesting document in the collection is the original of a letter from General Calixto Garcia to General Miles, dated June 6, 1898, relating to plans for the co-operation of the Cuban insurgents in the landing of American troops and their advance on Santiago.

Since the file contains no material concerning the major ships in Sampson's squadron nor the admiral's relations with the Navy Department, it is obviously but a part of the so-called "flag" files. It should be pointed out also that a good many, perhaps all, of the more important papers in the file can be found in the several compilations of documents relating to the Spanish-American War. This fact, however, does not detract from the importance of protecting the original sources themselves.

Emmett J. Leahy, director of the office, has been enrolled as a lieutenant commander, U.S.N.R. He will, however, continue in his present capacity as records administrator. An article by Commander Leahy entitled, "Records Administration and the War," appeared in a recent issue of the publication *Military Affairs*.

Joseph P. Brennan, chief of the Microphotographic Service, has been commissioned as lieutenant (j.g.) in the U. S. Naval Reserve and now serves as officer-in-charge of the Microphotographic Service. An article by him entitled, "Microfilming: Machine Tool of Management" appeared in a recent issue of the *Journal of Documentary Reproduction*. Lt. Brennan is presently

preparing a handbook for the use of microfilming supervisors and operators. Lt. (j.g.) James P. McKenna, Jr., U.S.N.R., will assist Lt. Brennan in directing the field activities of the Microphotographic Service. Lt. McKenna was formerly connected with the Recordak Corporation.

Lt. (j.g.) Paul L. Bishop, U.S.N.R., formerly an associate archivist at the National Archives, will assist in supervising the program of records scheduling which recently has been inaugurated in the department. Robert A. Shiff has recently joined the staff as junior archivist.

Foreign News

Australia

In a recent letter to Solon J. Buck, archivist of the United States, Kenneth Binns, librarian of the Commonwealth Parliament at Canberra, states that though there is no commonwealth archives, as yet, "we have begun to develop an archive consciousness since the war. A recent important step has been the appointment by the Government of a committee to formulate plans for proper preservation of the archives. The committee is naturally anxious to have the fullest information on archival work elsewhere. . . ." The National Archives has responded to this request for information by sending publications and special data to Australia.

The latest report of the South Australian Libraries Board covers the work of the Archives Department headed by G. H. Pitt. Mr. Pitt states that "the Archives Department has now reached the limit of shelving accommodation. Application has accordingly been made for further shelves to be fitted above the existing stacks, with a steel floor to an upper story. The extensive pulping of old records, which is now taking place [1940], has led to the offer of many important series of documents which cannot at present be accepted because of lack of accommodation." In commenting on the pulping of records, Mr. Pitts reports that "most of the condemned records were useless, but some valuable series were saved and transferred to the Archives." It appears that departmental heads have been instructed by the government "to send as many old records as possible for pulping."

Brazil

The director of the Arquivo Nacional, Dr. Ernesto Vilhena de Morais, has recently furnished microfilm copies of manuscripts in the Arquivo relating to Portuguese history to the Arquivo Histórico Colonial in Lisbon.

Senorita Maria de Lourdes Costa e Souza of Rio de Janeiro was a guest at the Archives Division of the Illinois State Library in September. As an Inter-American Governmental Intern, she is in the United States studying governmental methods, particularly filing practices and archival administration. She studied last year at American University and the University of

Michigan, and did practice and observation work at the National Archives. According to a notice in the October issue of *Illinois Libraries*, XXIV (1942), 239, "the Brazilian government is approaching its archival problems from the angle of control of production," *i.e.*, by the appointment of records co-ordinators within the several agencies of the government whose duties are "to analyze the records requirements of their respective departments and to devise the most suitable methods of creating, filing and otherwise preserving their archives. . . . Senorita de Costa e Souza expects to be assigned to such work upon her return to her own country."

Connecticut

James Brewster, state librarian, calls attention to the following publications: *Report of the Examiner of Public Records* for the two years ending June 30, 1942; *Bulletins* No. 17 and 18 entitled, respectively, "List of Manuscript Histories of Old Connecticut Houses Deposited in the State Library" and "List of Church Records Deposited in the State Library"; and *Connecticut State Records*, Volume 4 (1782), edited by L. W. Labaree, state historian. Among the manuscripts recently acquired are over 1,500 papers of the Connecticut Land Company relating to the Connecticut Western Reserve, and more than 500 manuscripts and account books relating to the construction of the Farmington Canal, including the general contract between James Hillhouse and Messrs. Walkley and Johnson.

Delaware

Leon de Valinger, archivist of Delaware, has sent a copy of the following circular letter and law to the heads of all state and county agencies and to the officials of the city of Wilmington:

> During our National emergency state, county, and municipal offices may experience shifts in personnel, expansion of offices, and changes of location. Such changes often require a transfer or re-organization of the files or the record storage room. It is in these unusually busy times that not as much care as formerly is exercised in the preservation of records which later may be invaluable.
>
> During and following the last war many of the State's very valuable records were disposed of to provide space in crowded file rooms. In such false economy the State has sustained an irreparable loss.
>
> To guard against such a loss in the future a law was passed in 1937 setting forth that no officer of a state, county, or municipal agency shall dispose of any of the noncurrent records or correspondence in his custody without the written consent of the Public Archives Commission. For your convenience a copy of this act is enclosed.
>
> May we ask that those having the custody of your files familiarize themselves with this act. If you have any records which you wish to dispose of, we ask that you please communicate with this office.

Chapter 92

Public Archives Commission

AN ACT TO AMEND CHAPTER 36 OF THE REVISED CODE OF DELAWARE, 1935, RELATING TO THE PUBLIC ARCHIVES COMMISSION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Delaware in General Assembly met:

Section 1. That Chapter 36 of the Revised Code of Delaware, 1935, be and the same is hereby amended by adding a new paragraph at the end of 1090. Sec. 7, of said Chapter 36, to be known as 1090A. Sec. 7A., as follows:

1090A. Sec. 7A. No officer of any court, department, board, commission, or agency of the State of Delaware or of any county or incorporated municipality therein, shall destroy, sell or otherwise dispose of any public record or printed public document, or official correspondence in his care or custody or under his control, or which are no longer in current use without first having advised the Public Archives Commission of their nature, and obtained its written consent. Nothing herein contained shall be construed to allow or permit the destruction or sale of any court, departmental, board, commission or agency minutes, maps, plans or papers having to do with legal titles.

In construing thereto, the words "public records" shall mean any written or printed book, document, or paper, map or plan, which is the property of any court, department, board, commission or agency of the State of Delaware or of any county or incorporated municipality therein, and in or on which any entry has been made or is required to be made by law, or which any officer or employee of the State of Delaware or of a county or an incorporated municipality has received or is required to receive for recording or filing.

Whoever shall violate any of the provisions of this Act shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof shall be fined not less than One Hundred ($100.00) Dollars nor more than Five Hundred ($500.00) Dollars.

All Acts or parts of Acts inconsistent with the provisions of this Act be and the same are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistencies only.

Approved May 11, 1937.

Mr. de Valinger reports that response to the circular has been very good; that more attention has been paid to the law, as is evidenced by the increased number of requests for the disposal of records of "impermanent value" and the official release of many cubic feet of valuable filing space.

Georgia

Through the efforts of John B. Wilson, secretary of state, the Department of Archives and History has acquired and is now operating a Barrow laminator.

Indiana

Harold Frederick Brigham took charge of the Indiana State Library, September 1, 1942, under the Library and Historical Board. A graduate of Princeton University and of the Library School of New York Public Library, his first position as head librarian was at the New Brunswick, New Jersey, Public Library. He served on the staff of the American Library Association, Chicago, for two years; then became librarian of the Carnegie Library, Nashville, Tennessee. Since 1931, he has been the librarian of the Free Public Library, Louisville, Kentucky. He is a fellow of the American Library Institute and a member of the executive board of the American Library Association. Mr. Brigham succeeds Christopher B. Coleman who had served as acting director of the library since 1936. Mr. Coleman is a member of the Society of American Archivists.

The following note entitled "The Legacy of Esther U. McNitt" was published in the *Library Occurrent* for September, 1942:

> On October 1, a year will have passed since the death of Esther U. McNitt, late head of the Indiana division of the State Library. She left the State Library the first of August, 1941, on a leave of absence from which she did not return.
>
> The archives of the state of Indiana, before Miss McNitt's time were what an ethnologist would call a "negative element." There was no collection by that name. Some of the state offices preserved their old official papers in their workrooms to the detriment of current transactions. Some stored their records, valuable and useless alike, in storerooms until later installments led to the removal of older papers, both the valuable and the useless. Many made no pretense of keeping records after they ceased to be of immediate official use. The year Miss McNitt came to the State Library the Division of Indiana History and Archives was created. First as the assistant, and then as head of this division, she saved from constantly recurring wreckage many important documents and series of papers. No adequate room could be provided for them in the space allotted to them in the State House, but she managed to preserve them and make them available.
>
> As the State Library and Historical Building neared completion in 1933, space and an assistant for the Archives became possible. In the course of the following three years the Archives developed into a separate division for which the collection made in the Division of Indiana History and Archives furnished a substantial nucleus; indeed, this collection was one of the most potent reasons for the new building and for the organization of a division of state archives. At last the creation of a state Commission on Public Records, with complete authority over official state records no longer in active use, put Indiana in the path of systematic and professional care of official documents. After the organization of a separate archival division, as before, Miss McNitt, head of the Indiana

division, continued in charge of papers of historical, though not of official value, and to the time of her last leave of absence was of incalculable help both in her own division and in its offshoot, the Division of Archives.

Manuscript and other rare material, including collections, which were acquired for the State Library either by her directly or through her initiative included: the Mereness cards, calendaring documents in relation to Indiana in Federal departments in Washington; a file of the *Western Sun*, a card directory of post offices in Indiana from the beginning; photostats of the United States Census of 1820 and of 1830 in Indiana; the Borden collection, including one unique copy of Indiana session laws; the John Tipton papers; letter books and correspondence of Robert S. Taylor; photostatic copies of the muster, pay and receipt rolls of the Indiana Territory volunteers of 1812; correspondence of Lucius B. Swift, including letters from Theodore Roosevelt, William H. Taft, and Albert J. Beveridge; Austin H. Brown papers; manuscript copy of the order book of the General Court of Indiana Territory, 1801-1810; account books of Joseph Bailly; Elisha Embree papers; large collection of music by Indiana composers presented by the Indiana Federation of Music Clubs; Geiger collection of theatrical and musical programs; collected source material on the War of 1917-1918; file of Indiana council of defense papers; biographical material about each member of the Indiana legislature; collection of autographed first editions of contemporary Indiana authors; and aerial photographs of Indiana cities.

The State Commission on Public Records of which the director of the state library, Harold F. Brigham, is now secretary, at intervals notifies state offices and state officials of the law governing the care and disposition of their papers. No public records can be destroyed or removed until three years after they originate and only after such action is approved and authorized by the State Commission on Public Records. The commission authorizes the destruction of records which are of no value. Records of permanent official value are removed to the state archives in the state library. Those having only historical value may be entrusted to the Indiana Division of the state library.

County commissions on public records provided for by law have similar jurisdiction over papers of county offices, commissions and boards. These commissions consist ex-officio of the judge of the circuit court, the county clerk (who is secretary of the commission), the county auditor, and the chairman of the board of county commissioners.

Iowa

Kenneth Colton has left the state Department of History and Archives for service with the armed forces.

A project tracing the evolution of state agencies, bureaus, commissions, and departments from territorial years to date for use by the Public Archives Division has been discontinued with the end of WPA projects in the state.

Also suspended is a project for alphabetizing the 1915 census cards deposited in the division.

Louisiana

Ruth Maygene Dunbar has taken over the direction of the Middle American Research Institute while the director, Arthur E. Gropp, is on leave in South America. The institute is busily engaged in cataloguing some 15,000 items acquired in recent years.

Maryland

The following members of the staff of the Hall of Records have resigned due to the call of military or defense work: Emil Fossan, assistant librarian; Allison Trader, chief of the photoduplication division; Katherine Held, librarian; Joan Knight, secretary; Elizabeth Meade, assistant archivist. Roger Thomas has been appointed assistant archivist.

Among recent accessions to the Hall of Records are the archives of the comptroller of the treasury; additional correspondence relative to Maryland stock in the Bank of England, 1800-1805; the auditor-general's day books, 1796-1806; and the Annapolis Mayor's Court proceedings, 1720-1784. Two publications previously announced as in preparation, the *Calendar of the Black Books* (colonial state papers) and the *Catalog of Archival Materials at the Hall of Records*, are now ready for distribution. A list of vital statistics for Maryland, compiled by the Historical Records Survey, is being prepared for publication. Work on a volume of early Prince Georges County Court records is continuing.

James W. Foster, formerly of the Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, has been appointed director of the Maryland Historical Society.

Massachusetts

Clifford Shipton, custodian of Harvard University Archives, writes that the archives has been very busy "negotiating with the Army and Navy schools now operating in the University." These schools, he says, present "very nice problems of archival policy for no two are of the same degree of relationship to Harvard. Some have their own faculty and courses and are only renting quarters of the University; and for others the University is furnishing the instruction."

The Baker Library of Harvard University Graduate School of Business has acquired the library and morgue of the Poor Publishing Company. This contains thousands of manila folders containing reports, circulars, clippings, and manuscript material collected by the company in connection with its service in years past of purveying financial information to the public. The material is being absorbed into the Corporation Records Division of the

library and will greatly enrich its collection of source materials for the study of business history.

Michigan

The information printed herewith concerning archival matters in Michigan is reprinted from the autumn issue of the *Michigan History Magazine*, XXVI (1942), 543-546.

Following the June meeting of the Michigan Historical Commission, the following letter and enclosure were released:

TO THE HEADS OF ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS, BOARDS, COMMISSIONS AND INSTITUTIONS:

In regard to old records of state offices, and in connection with the duty of the Michigan Historical Commission under Section 5 of Act No. 271, Public Acts of 1913 (Section 8118, Compiled Laws of 1929) to collect all such records, files, documents, books and papers as are not less than 30 years old and valuable for historical purposes, and to retain the same in its custody and possession for use of the public, we are forwarding to you an opinion from the Attorney General's office relative thereto, with assurance that we shall be pleased to examine for historical value such records as may be referred to the Historical Commission for such purpose.

Very respectfully,
THE MICHIGAN HISTORICAL COMMISSION,
GEORGE N. FULLER, *Sec'y.*

OPINION FROM THE OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Michigan Historical Commission
Lansing, Michigan
Attention: George N. Fuller
Secretary

Gentlemen:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of March 24, 1942 in which you ask the following question:

"What is the extent of legal power which a public officer, state or local, may exercise, to keep or to destroy public documents which originate in his office or which come into his office from any public source over which the state has jurisdiction?"

It is a recognized rule of law that public records or public documents, being property of the state or some political subdivision thereof, can only be voluntarily removed from the place where by law they are designated to be kept, or may be voluntarily mutilated or destroyed only when such removal, mutilation or destruction is authorized by the same authority which in the first instance required said record to be made and kept. This rule is well stated in 23 Ruling Case Law, p. 169, which reads:

"As heretofore stated, public records and documents are the prop-

erty of the state and not of the individual who happens, at the moment, to have them in his possession; and when they are deposited in the place designated for them by law there they must remain, and can be removed only under authority of an act of the legislature and in the manner and for the purpose designated by law. The custodian of a public record cannot deface it or give it up without authority from the same source which required it to be made."

The rule above stated was recognized by the legislature of the State of Michigan by enacting Act 6, Public Acts of Michigan 1851, which act as amended being Section 17018, Compiled Laws of 1929 provides as follows:

"All books, papers or records, belonging or in anywise appertaining to the offices of clerk, treasurer, register of deeds or judge of probate of the several counties, and also all books, papers and records belonging or in anywise appertaining to the offices of the several townships and school district officers of this state, are hereby declared to be public property, belonging to the people of the state of Michigan, to be used and preserved by and under the direction of said officers, and be by them preserved during their continuance in office.

"Any person who shall wilfully carry away, mutilate or destroy any of such books, papers, records or any part of the same, and any person who shall retain and continue to hold the possession of any books, papers or records, or parts thereof, belonging to the aforesaid offices of clerk, treasurer, register of deeds, or judge of probate of the several counties, or to the offices of the several township and school district officers of this state, and shall refuse to deliver up said books, papers, records, or parts thereof to the proper officer having charge of the office to which the said books, papers, or records belong, upon demand being made by such officer, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, punishable by imprisonment in the state prison not more than two (2) years or by a fine of not more than one thousand (1,000) dollars."

From the foregoing it is apparent that where a record is one required by law to be kept, or it is necessary that it be kept by a public officer in the discharge of the duty imposed on him by law, or the same is a writing required to be filed in the public office, or is a written memorial of a transaction of a public officer made in the discharge of his duty, the same is a public record and may not be disposed of, mutilated or destroyed without express authorization from the proper legislative body.

Very truly yours,

HERBERT J. RUSHTON,
Attorney General,
R. GLEN DUNN,
Deputy Attorney General.

Michigan Historical Commission within recent months has examined salvage documents of many state departments, institutions, boards and

commissions at their request, for materials of historical value. In the main, the records examined consist of purchase orders, requisitions, delivery reports, invoices, vouchers, old bills, receipts, control sheets and similar records of routine business, the most important of which are duplicated in the Auditor General's department. The various state agencies were uniformly interested and cooperative. They were found to be very responsive to the idea of having a central archival agency situated at Lansing and equipped with adequate apparatus for micro-filming documents. This is by statute a function of the Historical Commission.

Dr. Luther Evans of Washington, D.C., . . . recently made a careful analysis of the law of Michigan on the subject, and found it extremely good, which should be no surprise, since it was drawn by the late William L. Jenks of Port Huron, corporation attorney and one of the original members of the Michigan Historical Commission.

Commenting upon this law, however, Dr. R. G. Adams of the University of Michigan points out that while the law creating the Historical Commission "gives that body all sorts of rights and powers for assembling and safeguarding of state and county archives," the legislature has not provided the funds with which the provisions of its law may be executed. More was said about this by Dr. Adams in a paper read at the annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists in 1938, which was published in THE AMERICAN ARCHIVIST for April, 1939.

Among other things Dr. Adams said, "Wars and civil disturbances, such as we have had in our country and such as are going on elsewhere in the world today, inevitably cause the loss of records from archives as capitals are shelled or are moved hurriedly to other cities. If we as a society can not prevent wars, at least we can insist on intelligence and reliability among archivists to safeguard records in peace time, and we can urge adequate legislation in those states lacking it."

Reports of examinations which the Historical Commission made in the several state agencies desiring to release certain non-current records for salvage in connection with the national defense program, are on file at the office of the Commission, together with list of materials which were rescued for their historical value.

Mississippi

William D. McCain, director of the Department of Archives and History, reports the recent acquisition of small collections of private papers of 83 individuals and business firms of Mississippi. The 83 collections contain 4,750 loose pieces and 236 volumes.

The recent session of the legislature confirmed the appointment of Douglas Maxwell Bramlette, Woodville, to succeed his father, David C. Bramlette, as a member of the board of trustees of the Department of Archives and History. Other members reconfirmed were William H. Watkins, Jackson; Theodore D. Bratton, Jackson; Alexander Fitz-Hugh, Vicksburg; John F. Frier-

son, Columbus; G. Garland Lyell, Jackson; J. W. Provine, Clinton; Walter Sillers, Rosedale; and Alfred H. Stone, Greenville.

Moreau B. Chambers, curator and archaeologist of the Department of Archives and History, is on leave of absence to enter the navy.

The portrait of Dunbar Rowland, director of the Department of Archives and History from March 15, 1902, to November 1, 1937, has been placed in Mississippi's Hall of Fame.

New Jersey

The Board of Proprietors of East New Jersey has recently embarked on a restoration program for its records dating back to 1686. Under the direction of George J. Miller, recently appointed assistant to the registrar, the first two minute books, 1686-1705 and 1725-1764, have been silked and rebound. Thirty-eight parchments, including the original deed from Lady Carteret to the Board of Proprietors, have been restored and repaired. Since there are approximately 70,000 manuscripts in the custody of the board, the work of sorting, arranging, and repairing will require several years.

The following news article is reprinted from the *Newark Call*, November 22, 1942:

> A federally subsidized project to junk the records of other government-subsidized projects will get under way shortly in New Jersey.
>
> Earmarked for destruction are the tons of records of those depression-era projects such as leaf-raking and curbstone-marking, but in their destruction the state will obtain a large stock of currently hard-to-get office supplies and several hundred dollars in ready cash.
>
> Stored ceiling-high in the basement of a state-leased warehouse in Elizabeth are more than 7,000 sturdy wooden boxes, each packed with records—duplicates, triplicates and quadruplicates—of the defunct State Emergency Relief Administration, which tided thousands of New Jersey residents over the lean years of the early '30's.
>
> The records include time sheets, project outlines and authorizations for drugs, food, rent, electricity, gas and even spectacles.
>
> James E. Downes, state librarian and director of the state public records office, estimates that 95 per cent of the filled-out forms can safely be destroyed and sold for scrap paper.
>
> The junk dealers will get between 175 and 200 tons of paper—perhaps more—Downes estimates, and the state will get cash for them and a windfall of supplies, which include:
>
> About 200 large steel-re-enforced binders, which Downes said were worth $7 apiece; thousands of steel binder clips, which are high on the priority list, and re-enforced paper binders, also much sought after.
>
> Downes said he would not authorize the destruction of any records which might have future administrative value or be of assistance in the study of relief procedure.

"After all, we might have a similar problem on our hands ten years from now," he commented.

To complete the circle of "made work," the destruction of the unneeded records has been assigned to WPA workers.

The State House Commission has authorized the renting of space in the Industrial Office Building, Newark, for the project. The boxes of records will be trucked there from the Elizabeth warehouse and the WPA force will check over each box.

Downes estimated that a staff of 50 workers would require at least two months to complete the job. When all the scrap paper has been hauled away and the office supplies have been disposed of, there will be nothing left but those 7,000 sturdy wooden boxes—and the state can use them, too.

They will be handed over to the Department of Institutions and Agencies as containers for foodstuffs and other supplies transferred from one institution to another.

New York

Hermann F. Robinton has been appointed to the position of supervisor of public records, succeeding F. R. Stevens, the provisional incumbent. His appointment was made on the basis of a state-wide civil service examination for the position. Plans are being prepared for an archives building in Albany, the construction costs to be included in the post-war program of public improvements. A state war records commission will soon assume its functions, and a rather extensive program of archival activities is under way. Among other phases of the program are a regional system of depositories in the state, the preparation of disposal schedules, and the institution of forms and procedures on transfers and disposals.

The *New York Times* for September 20, 1942, carried the following announcement of interest to archivists:

> Establishment of a special collection of original historical and cultural New York State source materials at Cornell University was announced today by President Edmund E. Day.
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> "This project," he said, "contemplates the creation of a center at Cornell which will serve the entire State, as well as certain adjacent areas to which the original materials are closely related. Since much of the early material is subject to continuing loss and destruction, it has been thought important to get the collection under way despite the war."
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> The new collection, which will include some material now in the Cornell Library and more to be acquired under the direction of a new curator, will be housed in Boardman Hall, using the space once occupied by the Law Library before its removal to Myron Taylor Hall. The project will be financed in part by a special grant of $18,000 from the Rockefeller Foundation.
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> On recommendation of Dr. G. H. Sabine, Susan Linn Sage Professor

of Philosophy and dean of the Graduate School, who was chairman of a special faculty committee to formulate the program, the university has appointed Whitney R. Cross, now a graduate student in history at Harvard, as curator of the collection.

Supplementing the book collections of the University Library, the new collection will be made up of six general types of material: files of newspapers and magazines printed in up-State New York and adjacent regions; documents bearing on economic history, such as the business records of mills, stores, farms, manufacturing concerns and transportation companies; family records, including letters, diaries, journals or memoirs; county, township or municipal records bearing upon the settlement of the land or the formation of political units; educational and religious documents, such as the records of early colleges, academies and churches; and memorabilia of cultural history, such as play-bills, programs and records of folk-music and folk-literature.

North Carolina

Since 1926, when records were first kept of the number of visits paid to the North Carolina Historical Commission's search rooms for the purpose of using the records, the number of visits each biennium has been as follows:

1926-1928	1,987
1928-1930	2,859
1930-1932	3,259
1932-1934	2,666
1934-1936	2,999
1936-1938	3,423
1938-1940	3,918
1940-1942	4,253
Total	25,364

The *19th Biennial Report* of the commission is now ready for distribution. Also available is a bulletin entitled *The North Carolina Historical Commission: 40 Years of Public Service, 1903-1943*. Miss Geraldine Coburn has replaced Mrs. Parker in the Hall of History; Miss Beth Gilbert Crabtree has been placed in charge of the commission's search room; and Elmer D. Johnson has been employed as its collector of war records.

Among recent acquisitions of the Southern Historical Collection of the University of North Carolina are considerable additions to the Jesse F. Stallings, Herbert Arthur Cooley, John A. Quitman, W. S. Lovell, London, Moses Ashley Curtis, William Preston Bynum, John C. Pemberton, Southern Education Board, Edwin T. Halsey, Singleton, and Harding-Jackson collections. New collections acquired include the Civil War letters of Captain Cadwallader Jones of North Carolina and Alabama; the Civil War letters of Dr. Elias

Davis of Alabama; papers of Judge Armistead Burwell of North Carolina; papers of General Raleigh E. Colston, C.S.A., of Virginia; papers of Eden Thomas Hale, a Union soldier, while stationed in New Bern, North Carolina; letters and a manuscript biography of General James A. Walker, C.S.A., of Virginia; diaries, letters, scrapbooks, speeches, and miscellaneous writings of Henry Kyd Douglas, C.S.A., of Virginia, the author of *I Rode with Stonewall;* letters of Dr. John B. Elliott of Tennessee and Louisiana; a collection of letters and scrapbooks of Governor and General Edward O'Neal, C.S.A., of Alabama; a collection of letters and other papers of John Kimberly, C.S.A., a professor in the University of North Carolina; the diary of William D. Alexander; the diary of Edmund Strudwick of North Carolina and Alabama; the plantation diary of Thomas D. Boone of South Carolina; a collection of letters of Mrs. Laura C. Phillips of North Carolina; papers of Duncan G. MacRae of North Carolina; and papers of A. A. F. Seawell of North Carolina.

The State Literary and Historical Association at its annual meeting in Raleigh on December 2-3, heard addresses on the preservation of North Carolina's records and on the history and work of the North Carolina Historical Commission by Miss Gertrude Caraway and Clarence Poe.

Oregon

The following excerpts from the *Annual Report* of Lewis A. McArthur, president of the Oregon Historical Society, are indicative of the many problems and emergency activities faced by state and local history organizations during the past year.

> At the directors' meeting held in January earnest attention was given to the matter of safeguarding the most valuable records owned by the Society. A special committee, consisting of Dr. Burt Brown Barker, Omar C. Spencer, Robert W. Sawyer and Ferry Smith was appointed to study the situation and was given power to make such moves as might be necessary.
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> It was found that there could be made available a small room on the corridor of the third floor, under the concrete balcony, protected with concrete walls and floor. A metal cased fire door was installed and many of the most valuable papers were moved to and installed in this room.
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> The committee also took up the matter of making duplicates of documents of which there are no copies, and it was decided that microfilming was the most practicable process. Dr. Barker volunteered to undertake the task of making these microfilms, and it is largely due to his efficient efforts that the work was done. Dr. Barker spent long hours of his time handling thousands to the Society's valuable papers and our thanks are due to him for his fine accomplishment.
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> Dr. Barker found that all microfilming machines in this territory were either requisitioned by the Federal Government or on rental and in

use by private agencies. He secured the names of owners of machines, and through the kindness of the United States National Bank he was able to secure the use of a suitable instrument and operating personnel. There were many complications in the operation, brought about by the fact that the work of the bank naturally had to be taken care of first. Dr. Barker, assisted on some trips by Mr. Patterson of our staff, made 34 trips to the Killingsworth Street branch of the bank, which took 135 hours of his time. A total of 21 reels of film was made and processed, covering nearly 13,000 documents of the Oregon Provisional and Territorial Government. In addition, Dr. Barker put in about 50 hours of time filming pioneer letters, totaling 13 reels. A box containing 35 reels of film, or about 3340 feet, was dispatched to a safe depository in the Midwest.

Dr. Barker also secured, through the aid of Mr. E. B. MacNaughton, the use of a machine at the First National Bank, where 12 reels of film were made covering the card index of vital statistics and the card index of the Provisional and Territorial papers. These 12 reels contain duplicates of about 50,000 index cards and they have been sent away for safekeeping. The value of this achievement by Dr. Barker cannot be exaggerated. Our thanks are due to him and also to the banks and other organizations and individuals who assisted in the work.

Shortly after the first of the year we began to receive calls for birth information from our industry workers who were required to furnish such data before they could take jobs in shipyards and similar enterprises. It is estimated that more than 1000 persons called at the Society's rooms in hope of securing birth information.

Birth news printed in papers is accepted as supporting evidence and is of great value to persons who are trying to perfect their birth records. Our staff is always glad to help in this important work, and the Society has placed its services and newspaper files at the disposal of people looking for birth news.

The Society's rooms in the Auditorium contain by far the largest collection of Oregon newspapers in existence. Miss Pipes tells me that the Society has 2463 volumes of bound newspapers and 4149 volumes of unbound papers. This collection dates from Provisional government days, and includes long runs of newspapers both living and dead. The task of bringing out and opening up hundreds of volumes of old newspapers has been a very heavy one. The staff was able to secure information for about 300 persons, or about 30 per cent of those making requests. I am sure that this has been a highly valuable activity on the part of the Society, and I know that a great many workers have been appreciative of the service, furnished of course without charge.

Another war activity has been that of assisting in the selection of names for merchant ships built in Portland. This project was at the request of the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation, and has required time and energy for research. It should be understood that the Society does

not select the names, but merely offers suggestions. The Maritime Commission makes the selection from names suggested by the Society, and also names suggested by a number of other agencies and individuals.

The defense mapping project being carried on by the U. S. Engineers in Portland has required substantial research by representatives of the Society. Your president has been in close touch with this work and has read proof on more than 50 maps covering strategic areas in Oregon, checking geographic names. A great many names have required study and investigation by the staff before correct spellings and applications could be determined. This is a highly important defense work, because war maps must be accurate.

From the description of the projects mentioned above, it will be seen that the regular staff of the Society has been heavily loaded with work directly incident to the war. Your officers and directors feel that the staff should be enlarged, and have made a request for additional funds to the state budget director. It is hoped that the administration and the coming session of the legislature will grant the Society additional help.

. . . An index, which sells for 50 cents, in paper covers, is a guide to the Society's manuscript collections. It is estimated that this index refers to nearly 10,000 individual letters and documents. These indexes are of great practical value in historical research even though they may be used in locations far from the files of publications covered by the lists. . . .

Pennsylvania

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has acquired the Uselma Clarke Smith collection of the papers of William Jones, a Revolutionary army officer from Pennsylvania, who served his country during his lifetime as a member of the Third Congress, minister to Denmark, commissioner of purchases for the War Department, and Secretary of the Navy. The collection comprises over 1,000 items and includes letters from many prominent figures on the American political and economic scene prior to 1820. The collection is briefly described on page 479 of the October issue of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*.

Rhode Island

The following notice was published in the October issue of *Rhode Island History*, 1 (1942), 143.

An agreement recently entered into by a Committee, sponsored and financed by the Social Science Research Council, of New York, with Brown University, the John Carter Brown Library and the Rhode Island Historical Society, at last opens the way for the arrangement and exploitation of the wealth of historical materials contained in the papers of the various members of the Brown family. These manuscripts are

housed in the John Carter Brown Library and the Library of the Rhode Island Historical Society.

Work on this ambitious project, which began on September first, 1942, is to continue over a period of several years under the direction of Prof. James B. Hedges, of Brown University. When it is completed, the treasures of these great collections will, for the first time, be thoroughly available to historical investigators. A preliminary examination of the papers has already revealed their significant bearing, not only on many aspects of American economic development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but upon a multitude of other subjects as well.

Joseph S. Jackson, formerly in charge of special collections at Brown University Library, was inducted into the army in October. His position is being filled by Mrs. Christine D. Hathaway.

Virginia

Earl G. Swem, librarian of the College of William and Mary, reports the recent accession of the Charles Campbell papers, "one of the most important collections of personal papers now in any Virginia depository." Campbell was the author of a history of Virginia, published in 1860, and a contributor to the *Southern Literary Messenger*. In addition to his correspondence with the editors of this journal, the collection includes copies of correspondence with members of the Spotswood, Moore, and other prominent families of the state; correspondence with many men prominent in historical investigation during the years 1840-1870; his diary kept during the Civil War; his wife's diary covering the years 1840-1870; and a very interesting group of letters written by one of the ladies of Shirley Plantation, which furnishes an excellent picture of plantation life during the same period.

"A Plan for the Collection and Preservation of World War II Records," by Lester J. Cappon, consultant in history and archives, University of Virginia Library, has been published in October, 1942, by the Social Science Research Council. Copies of this publication may be obtained from the council, 230 Park Avenue, New York City, or from the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources, National Archives Building, Washington, D.C. The Committee on the Control of Social Data of the Social Science Research Council has recently authorized Mr. Cappon to make a continuation study on the same subject and, in co-operation with the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources, to aid in promoting projects in the several states for the collection and preservation of war materials. Mr. Cappon has been designated a member of the Committee on Conservation of Cultural Resources as the official representative of the Society of American Archivists.

Wisconsin

The most important collection of manuscripts received by the state historical

society during the past year consisted of the papers of the late Congressman John J. Esch who served in Congress for twenty-two years beginning in 1899. He was co-author of the Esch-Cummins Transportation Act of 1920, which returned the railroads to private ownership after the first World War and was a member of the Federal Interstate Commerce Commission, 1921-1928. The collection includes nearly 200 letter boxes and some fifty letter books.